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THE HISTORY OF SPIRITUALISM

Photo : W. Ransford

SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

The History of Spiritualism

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THE HISTORY OF SPIRITUALISM

CHAPTER XV

THE CAREER OF EUSAPIA PALLADINO

THE mediumship of Eusapia Palladino marks an important stage in the history of psychical research, because she was the first medium for physical phenomena to be examined by a large number of eminent men of science. The chief manifestations that occurred with her were the movement of objects without contact, the levitation of a table and other objects, the levitation of the medium, the appearance of materialized hands and faces, lights, and the playing of musical instruments without human contact. All these phenomena took place, as we have seen, at a much earlier date with the medium D. D. Home, but when Sir William Crookes invited his scientific brethren to come and examine them they declined. Now for the first time these strange facts were the subject of prolonged investigation by men of European reputation. Needless to say, these experimenters were at first sceptical in the highest degree, and so-called "tests" (those often silly precautions which may defeat the very object aimed at) were the order of the day. No medium in the whole world has been

more rigidly tested than this one, and since she was able to convince the vast majority of her sitters, it is clear that her mediumship was of no ordinary type. It is little use pointing out that no psychic researcher should be admitted to the séance room without at least some elementary knowledge of the complexities of mediumship and the right conditions for its unfoldment, or without, for instance, an understanding of the basic truth that it is not the medium alone, but the sitters equally, who are factors in the success of the experiment. Not one scientific man in a thousand recognizes this, and the fact that Eusapia triumphed in spite of such a tremendous handicap is an eloquent tribute to her powers.

The mediumistic career of this humble, illiterate Neapolitan woman, of surpassing interest as well as of extreme importance in its results, supplies yet another instance of the lowly being used as the instrument to shatter the sophistries of the learned. Eusapia was born on January 21, 1854, and died in 1918. Her mediumship began to manifest itself when she was about fourteen years of age. Her mother died at her birth, and her father when she was twelve years old. At the house of friends with whom she went to stay she was persuaded to sit at a table with others. At the end of ten minutes the table was levitated, the chairs began to dance, the curtains in the room to swell, and glasses and bottles to move about. Each sitter was tested in turn to discover who was responsible for the movements, and in the end it was decided that Eusapia was the medium. She took no

interest in the proceedings, and only consented to have further sittings to please her hosts and prevent herself from being sent to a convent. It was not until her twenty-second or twenty-third year that her Spiritualistic education began, and then, according to M. Flammarion, it was directed by an ardent Spiritualist, Signor Damiani.

In connexion with this period Eusapia relates a singular incident. At Naples an English lady who had become the wife of Signor Damiani was told at a table séance by a spirit, giving the name of John King, to seek out a woman named Eusapia, the street and the number of the house being specified. He said she was a powerful medium through whom he intended to manifest. Madame Damiani went to the address indicated and found Eusapia Palladino, of whom she had not previously heard. The two women held a séance and John King controlled the medium, whose guide or control he continued ever after to be.

Her first introduction to the European scientific world came through Professor Chiaia, of Naples, who in 1888 published in a journal issued in Rome a letter to Professor Lombroso, detailing his experiences and inviting this celebrated alienist to investigate the medium for himself. It was not until 1891 that Lombroso accepted this invitation, and in February of that year he had two sittings with Eusapia in Naples. He was converted, and wrote: "I am filled with confusion and regret that I combated with so much persistence the possibility of the facts called Spiritualistic." His conversion led many important

scientific men in Europe to investigate, and from now onward Madame Palladino was kept busy for many years with test sittings.

Lombroso's Naples sittings in 1891 were followed by the Milan Commission in 1892, which included Professor Schiaparelli, Director of the Observatory of Milan; Professor Gerosa, Chair of Physics; Ermacora, Doctor of Natural Philosophy; M. Aksakof, Councillor of State to the Emperor of Russia; Charles du Prel, Doctor of Philosophy in Munich; and Professor Charles Richet, of the University of Paris. Seventeen sittings were held. Then came investigations in Naples in 1893; in Rome, 1893–4; in Warsaw, and France, in 1894—the latter under the direction of Professor Richet, Sir Oliver Lodge, Mr. F. W. H. Myers, and Dr. Ochorowicz; in 1895 at Naples; and in the same year in England, at Cambridge, in the house of Mr. F. W. H. Myers, in the presence of Professor and Mrs. Sidgwick, Sir Oliver Lodge and Dr. Richard Hodgson. They were continued in 1895 in France at the house of Colonel de Rochas; in 1896 at Tremezzo, at Auteuil, and at Choisy Yvrac; in 1897 at Naples, Rome, Paris, Montfort, and Bordeaux; in Paris in November, 1898, in the presence of a scientific committee composed of MM. Flammarion, Charles Richet, A. de Rochas, Victorien Sardou, Jules Claretie, Adolphe Bisson, G. Delanne, G. de Fontenay, and others; also in 1901 at the Minerva Club in Geneva, in the presence of Professors Porro, Morselli, Bozzano, Venzano, Lombroso, Vassalo, and others. There

were many other experimental sittings with scientific men, both in Europe and in America.

Professor Chiaia, in his letter to Professor Lombroso already referred to, gave this picturesque description of the phenomena occurring with Eusapia. He invited him to observe a special case which he considers worthy of the serious attention of the mind of a Lombroso, and continues :

The case I allude to is that of an invalid woman who belongs to the humblest class of society. She is nearly thirty years old and very ignorant ; her look is neither fascinating nor endowed with the power which modern criminologists call irresistible ; but when she wishes, be it by day or by night, she can divert a curious group for an hour or so with the most surprising phenomena. Either bound to a seat or firmly held by the hands of the curious, she attracts to her the articles of furniture which surround her, lifts them up, holds them suspended in the air like Mahomet's coffin, and makes them come down again with undulatory movements, as if they were obeying her will. She increases their weight or lessens it according to her pleasure. She raps or taps upon the walls, the ceiling, the floor, with fine rhythm and cadence. In response to the requests of the spectators, something like flashes of electricity shoot forth from her body, and envelop her or enwrap the spectators of these marvellous scenes. She draws upon cards that you hold out, everything that you want—figures, signatures, numbers, sentences—by just stretching out her hand toward the indicated place.

If you place in the corner of the room a vessel containing a layer of soft clay, you find after some moments the imprint in it of a small or a large hand, the image

of a face (front view or profile) from which a plaster cast can be taken. In this way portraits of a face taken at different angles have been preserved, and those who desire so to do can thus make serious and important studies.

This woman rises in the air, no matter what bands tie her down. She seems to lie upon the empty air, as on a couch, contrary to all the laws of gravity ; she plays on musical instruments—organs, bells, tambourines—as if they had been touched by her hands or moved by the breath of invisible gnomes. . . . This woman at times can increase her stature by more than four inches.

Professor Lombroso, as we have seen, was interested enough by this graphic account to investigate, with the result that he was converted. The Milan Committee (1892), the next to experiment, say in their report:

It is impossible to count the number of times that a hand appeared and was touched by one of us. Suffice it to say that doubt was no longer possible. It was indeed a living human hand which we saw and touched, while at the same time the bust and arms of the medium remained visible, and her hands were held by those on either side of her.

Many phenomena occurred in the light supplied by two candles and an oil-lamp, and the same occurrences were witnessed in full light when the medium was in trance. Dr. Ochorowicz persuaded Eusapia to visit Warsaw in 1894, and the experiments there were in the presence of men and women eminent in scientific and philosophical circles. The record of these sittings says that partial and complete levitations of the table and many other physical phenomena were

obtained. These levitations occurred while both the medium's feet were visible in the light, and when her feet were tied and held by a sitter kneeling under the table.

After the sittings at Professor Richet's house on the Ile Roubaud in 1894, Sir Oliver Lodge in the course of his report to the English Society for Psychical Research said:

> However the facts are to be explained, the possibility of the facts I am constrained to admit. There is no further room in my mind for doubt. Any person without invincible prejudice who had had the same experience would have come to the same broad conclusion, viz.: that things hitherto held impossible do actually occur. . . . The result of my experience is to convince me that certain phenomena usually considered abnormal do belong to the order of nature, and, as a corollary from this, that these phenomena ought to be investigated and recorded by persons and societies interested in natural knowledge.*

At the meeting at which Sir Oliver Lodge's report was read, Sir William Crookes drew attention to the resemblance of the phenomena occurring with Eusapia to those that happened in the presence of D. D. Home.

Sir Oliver Lodge's report was adversely criticized by Dr. Richard Hodgson, then absent in the United States, and as a consequence Eusapia Palladino and Dr. Hodgson were invited to England, and a series of sittings were held at Cambridge at the house of Mr. F. W. H. Myers in August and September, 1895. These "Cambridge Experiments," as

**Journal*, S.P.R., Vol. VI, Nov. 1894., pp. 334, 360.

they were called, were for the most part unsuccessful, and it was claimed that the medium was repeatedly detected in fraud. A great deal has been written on both sides in the acute controversy that followed. It is enough to say that competent observers refused to accept this verdict on Eusapia, and that they roundly condemned the methods adopted by the Cambridge group of experimenters.

It is interesting to recall that an American reporter, on the occasion of Eusapia's visit to his country in 1910, bluntly asked the medium if she had ever been caught tricking. Here is Eusapia's frank reply: "Many times I have been told so. You see, it is like this. Some people are at the table who expect tricks —in fact, they want them. I am in a trance. Nothing happens. They get impatient. They think of the tricks—nothing but tricks. They put their mind on the tricks, and—I—and I automatically respond. But it is not often. They merely will me to do them. That is all." This sounds like Eusapia's ingenious adoption of a defence she has heard others make on her behalf. At the same time it has no doubt an element of truth in it, the psychological side of mediumship being little understood.

Two important observations may be made in this connexion. First, as Dr. Hereward Carrington pointed out, various experiments conducted with the object of duplicating the phenomena by fraudulent means resulted in complete failure in almost every case. Second, that the Cambridge sitters were apparently entirely ignorant of the existence and

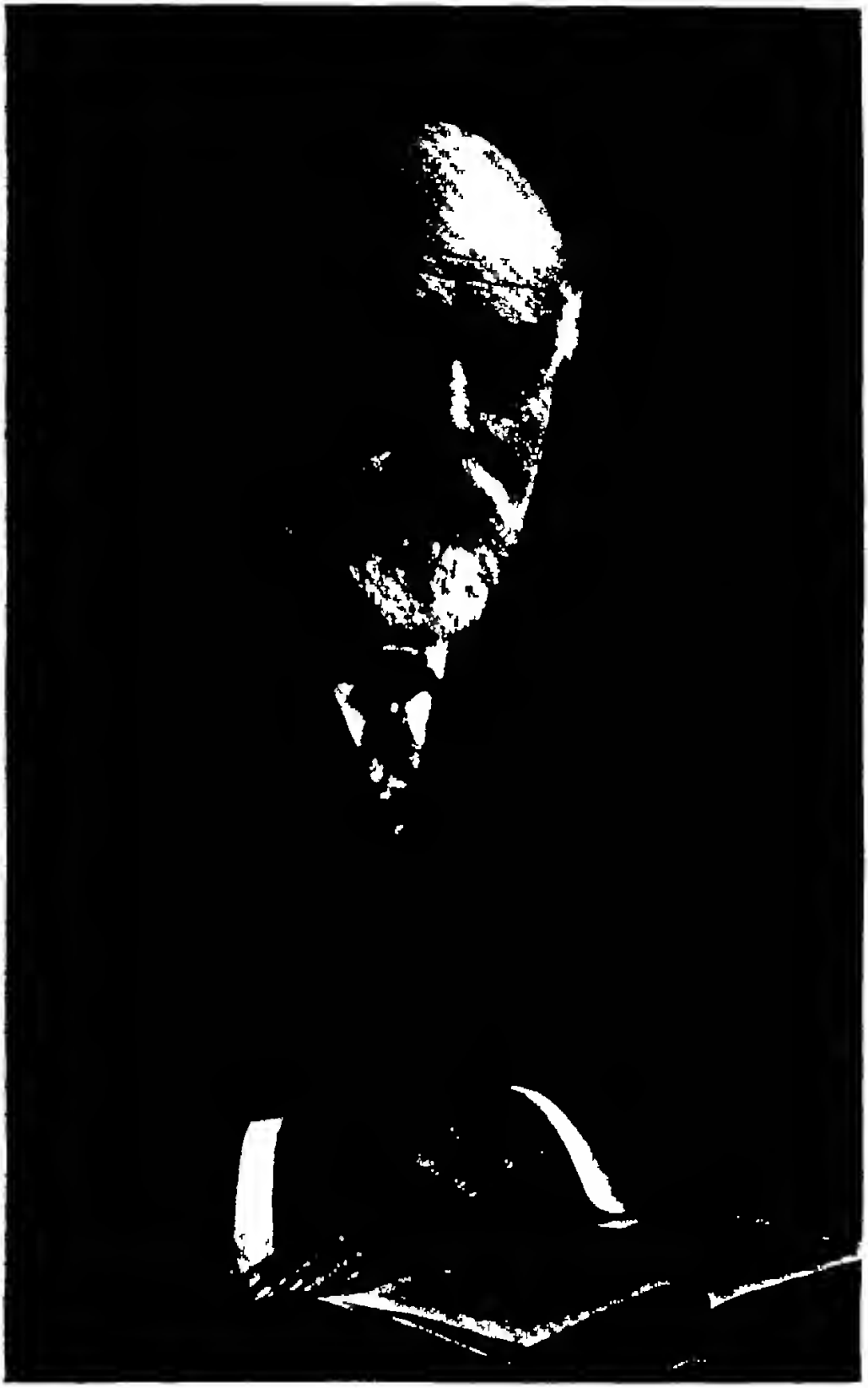


Photo · Lafayette

SIR OLIVER LODGE

operation of what may be called the "ectoplasmic limb," a phenomenon observed in the case of Slade and other mediums. Carrington says: "All the objections Mrs. Sidgwick raises might be met if we could suppose that Eusapia materializes for the time being *a third arm*, which produces these phenomena, and which recedes into her body at the conclusion of a phenomenon." Now, strange as it may appear, this is just the conclusion to which abundant evidence points. As early as 1894 Sir Oliver Lodge saw what he describes as an "appearance as of extra limbs," continuous with Eusapia's body or very close to it. With that assurance which ignorance so often assumes, the editorial comment in the *Journal* of the Society for Psychical Research, wherein Sir Oliver's account was printed, says: "It is hardly necessary to remark that the continuity of the 'spirit' limbs with the body of the medium is *prima facie* a circumstance strongly suggestive of fraud."

But later scientific investigators amply confirm Sir Oliver Lodge's surmise. Professor Bottazzi states:

> Another time, later on, the same hand was placed on my right forearm, without squeezing it. On this occasion I not only carried my left hand to the spot, but I looked, so I could see and feel at the same time: I saw a human hand, of natural colour, and I felt with mine the fingers and the back of a lukewarm, nervous, rough hand. *The hand dissolved, and (I saw it with my eyes) retreated as if into Madame Palladino's body, describing a curve.* I confess that I felt some doubt as to whether Eusapia's left hand had freed itself from my right hand, to reach my forearm, but at the same instant I was able to prove to myself that

the doubt was groundless, because our two hands were still in contact in the ordinary way. If all the observed phenomena of the seven séances were to disappear from my memory, this one I could never forget.

Professor Galeotti, in July, 1907, plainly saw what he called the doubling of the left arm of the medium. He exclaimed: "Look, I see two left arms, identical in appearance! One is on the little table, and it is that which M. Bottazzi touches, and the other seems to come out of her shoulder—to approach her, and touch her, and then return and melt into her body again. This is not an hallucination." At a séance in July, 1905, at the house of M. Berisso, when Eusapia's hands were thoroughly controlled and visible to all, Dr. Venzano and others present "distinctly saw a hand and an arm covered by a dark sleeve issue from the front and upper part of the right shoulder of the medium." Much similar testimony might be given.

Towards a study of the complexities of mediumship, especially with Eusapia, the following case is deserving of serious attention. In a sitting with Professor Morselli, Eusapia had been detected liberating her hand from the professor's grasp and stretching it out to reach a trumpet which was on the table. She was prevented, however, from doing this. The report then says:

> At this moment, while the control was certainly more rigorous than ever, the trumpet was raised from the table and disappeared into the cabinet, passing between the medium and Dr. Morselli. Evidently the medium had attempted to do with her hand what she subsequently did

mediumistically. Such a futile and foolish attempt at fraud is inexplicable. There is no doubt about the matter ; this time the medium did not touch, and could not touch, the trumpet ; and even if she could have touched it she could not have conveyed it into the cabinet, which was behind her back.

It may be mentioned that a corner of the room was curtained off to form what is called a " cabinet " (i.e. an enclosure to gather " power ") and that Eusapia, unlike most other mediums, sat *outside* it, about a foot distant from the curtains behind her.

The Society for Psychical Research in 1895 had decided that Eusapia's phenomena were all fraudulent, and would have no more to do with her. But on the Continent of Europe group after group of scientific inquirers, adopting the most rigorous precautions, endorsed Eusapia's powers. Then in 1908 the Society for Psychical Research decided to investigate this medium once more. It nominated three of its most capable sceptics. One, Mr. W. W. Baggally, a member of the Council, had been investigating psychic phenomena for more than thirty-five years, and during that time—with the exception, perhaps, of a few incidents at a séance with Eusapia a few years before—had never witnessed a single genuine physical phenomenon. " Throughout his investigations he had invariably detected fraud, and nothing but fraud." Also, he was an expert conjurer. Mr. Everard Feilding, the honorary secretary of the society, had been investigating for some ten years, but " during all that time he had never seen one physical phenomenon

which appeared to him to be conclusively proved," unless, again, perhaps in the case of a séance with Eusapia. Dr. Hereward Carrington, the third of the nominees, though he had attended countless séances, could say, until he sat with Eusapia, "I had never seen one single manifestation of the physical order which I could consider genuine."

At first blush this record of the three investigators seems like a crushing blow to the assumptions of the Spiritualists. But in the investigation of Eusapia Palladino this trio of sceptics met their Waterloo. The full story of their long and patient research of this medium at Naples will be found in Dr. Hereward Carrington's book, "Eusapia Palladino and Her Phenomena" (1909).

As evidence of the careful investigation of scientific investigators on the Continent, we may mention that Professor Morselli noted no fewer than thirty-nine distinct types of phenomena occurring with Eusapia Palladino.

The following incidents may be mentioned because they can well be classed under the heading "Fool-proof." Of a séance in Rome in 1894, in the presence of Professor Richet, Dr. Schrenck Notzing, Professor Lombroso, and others, the report says:

> Hoping to obtain the movement of an object without contact, we placed a little piece of paper folded in the form of the letter "A" under a glass, and upon a disc of light pasteboard. . . . Not being successful in this, we did not wish to fatigue the medium, and we left the apparatus upon the large table; then we took our places around the

little table, after having carefully shut all the doors, the keys of which I begged my guests to put in their pockets, in order that we might not be accused of not having taken all necessary precautions.

The light was extinguished. Soon we heard the glass resound on our table, and having procured a light, we found it in the midst of us, in the same position, upside down, and covering the little piece of paper ; only the cardboard disc was wanting. We sought for it in vain. The séance ended. I conducted my guests once more into the ante-chamber. M. Richet was the first to open the door—well bolted on the inside. What was not his surprise when he perceived near to the threshold of the door, on the other side of it, upon the staircase, the disc that we had sought for so long ! He picked it up, and it was identified by all as the card placed under the glass.

A strong objective proof worth recording is the fact that M. de Fontenay photographed various hands appearing over Eusapia's head, and in one photograph the medium's hands can be seen to be securely held by the investigators. Reproductions of these photographs are given in the "Annals of Psychical Science" (April, 1908, p. 181 *et seq.*).

At the sixth and last séance of the series at Genoa with Professor Morselli in 1906–7, an effective test was devised. The medium was tied to the couch with a thick, broad band, of the kind used in asylums to fasten down maniacs, and capable of being tied very tightly without cutting the flesh. Morselli, with experience as an alienist, performed the operation, and also secured the wrists and ankles. After a red electric lamp of ten-candle power had been lighted, the

table, which was free from all contact, moved from time to time, small lights were seen and a hand. At one stage the curtains in front of the cabinet opened, giving a view of the medium lying securely bound. "The phenomena," says an account, "were inexplicable considering that the position rendered movement on her part impossible."

Here, in conclusion, are two accounts, out of many, of convincing materializations. The first is related by Dr. Joseph Venzano in the "Annals of Psychical Science" (Vol. VI, p. 164, September, 1907). Light was provided by a candle, enabling the figure of the medium to be seen:

In spite of the dimness of the light I could distinctly *see* Madame Palladino and my fellow sitters. Suddenly I perceived that behind me was a form, fairly tall, which was leaning its head on my left shoulder and sobbing violently, so that those present could hear the sobs: it kissed me repeatedly. I clearly perceived the outlines of this face, which touched my own, and I felt the very fine and abundant hair in contact with my left cheek, so that I could be quite sure that it was a woman. The table then began to move, and by typtology gave the name of a close family connexion who was known to no one present except myself. She had died some time before, and on account of incompatibility of temperament there had been serious disagreements with her. I was so far from expecting this typtological response that I at first thought this was a case of coincidence of name, but while I was mentally forming this reflection I felt a mouth, with warm breath, touch my left ear and whisper, *in a low voice in Genoese dialect*, a succession of sentences, the murmur of which was audible to the sitters. These sentences were broken

by bursts of weeping, and their gist was repeatedly to implore pardon for injuries done to me, with a fullness of detail connected with family affairs which could only be known to the person in question. The phenomenon seemed so real that I felt compelled to reply to the excuses offered me with expressions of affection, and to ask pardon in my turn if any resentment of the wrongs referred to had been excessive. But I had scarcely uttered the first syllables when two hands, with exquisite delicacy, applied themselves to my lips and prevented my continuing. The form then said to me, "Thank you," embraced me, kissed me, and disappeared.

With other mediums there have been finer materializations than this one, and in better light, but in this case there was internal, mental evidence of identity.

The last example we shall give occurred in Paris, in 1898, at a sitting at which M. Flammarion was present, when M. Le Bocain addressed a materialized spirit in Arabic, saying: "If it is really thou, Rosalie, who art in the midst of us, pull the hair on the back of my head three times in succession." About ten minutes later, and when M. Le Bocain had almost completely forgotten his request, he felt his hair pulled three separate times, just as he had desired. He says: "I certify this fact, which, besides, formed for me a most convincing proof of the presence of a familiar spirit close about us." He adds that it is hardly necessary to say that Eusapia knows no Arabic.

Opponents and a section of psychic researchers contend that the evidence for phenomena occurring

at séances is of little value because the usual observers have no knowledge of the resources of conjurers. In New York in 1910 Dr. Hereward Carrington took with him to a séance given by Eusapia, Mr. Howard Thurston, whom he describes as the most noted magician in America. Mr. Thurston who, with his assistant, controlled the hands and feet of the medium in a good light, wrote:

> I witnessed in person the table levitations of Madame Eusapia Palladino . . . and am thoroughly convinced that the phenomena I saw were not due to fraud and were not performed by the aid of her feet, knees, or hands.

He offered to give a thousand dollars to a charitable institution if it could be proved that this medium could not levitate the table without resort to trickery or fraud.

It will be asked what has been the outcome of all the years of investigation conducted with this medium. A number of scientists holding with Sir David Brewster that "Spirit" is the last thing they will give in to have invented ingenious hypotheses to account for the phenomena, of the genuine nature of which they are fully convinced. Colonel de Rochas tried to explain them by what he called "exteriorization of motivity." M. de Fontenay spoke of a dynamic theory of matter ; others believe in "ectenic force" and "collective consciousness," and the action of the subconscious mind, but those cases, well authenticated, where the operation of an independent intelligence is clearly shown, make these attempted explanations

untenable. Various experimenters were forced to adopt the Spiritualist hypothesis as the only one that explained *all* the facts in a reasonable way. Dr. Venzano says :

> In the greater number of the materialized forms perceived by us either by sight, contact, or hearing, we were able to recognize points of resemblance to deceased persons, generally our relatives, unknown to the medium and known only to those present who were concerned with the phenomena.

Dr. Hereward Carrington speaks with no uncertain voice. Regarding Mrs. Sidgwick's opinion that it is useless to speculate whether the phenomena are Spiritualistic in character, or whether they represent "some unknown biological law," until the facts themselves have been established, he says : "I must say that before I obtained my sittings I, too, took Mrs. Sidgwick's view." And he continues : "My own sittings convinced me finally and conclusively that genuine phenomena *do* occur, and, that being the case, the question of their interpretation naturally looms before me. . . . I think that not only is the Spiritualistic hypothesis justified as a working theory, but it is, in fact, the only one capable of rationally explaining the facts." *

The mediumship of Eusapia Palladino, as we said at the outset, was similar to that of others, but she had the advantage of enlisting the attention of men of influence whose published accounts of her phenomena

* "Eusapia Palladino and Her Phenomena." By Hereward Carrington Ph.D., pp. 250–1.

have had a weight not given to the utterances of less well-known people. Lombroso in particular has recorded his convictions in his well-known book, "After Death—What?" (1909). Eusapia was the means of demonstrating the reality of certain facts not accepted by orthodox science. It is easier for the world to deny these facts than to explain them, and that is the course usually adopted.

Those who try to explain away all Eusapia's mediumship by alluding to her superficial habit of playing conscious or unconscious tricks upon the sitters are simply deceiving themselves. That such tricks are played is beyond all question. Lombroso, who entirely endorses the validity of her mediumship, describes the tricks thus:

> Many are the crafty tricks she plays, both in the state of trance (unconsciously) and out of it—for example, freeing one of her two hands, held by the controllers, for the sake of moving objects near her; making touches; slowly lifting the legs of the table by means of one of her knees and one of her feet; and feigning to adjust her hair and then slyly pulling out one hair and putting it over the little balance tray of a letter-weigher in order to lower it. She was seen by Faifofer, before her séances, furtively gathering flowers in a garden, that she might feign them to be "apports" by availing herself of the shrouding dark of the room. . . . And yet her deepest grief is when she is accused of trickery during the séances—accused unjustly, too, sometimes, it must be confessed, because we are now sure that phantasmal limbs are superimposed (or added to) her own and act as their substitute, while all the time they were believed to be her own limbs detected in the act of cozening for their owner's behoof.

In her visit to America, which was late in life when her powers were at a low ebb, she was detected in these obvious tricks and offended her sitters to such an extent that they discarded her, but Howard Thurston, the famous conjurer, narrates that he determined to disregard these things and continued the sitting, with the result that he obtained an undoubted materialization. Another well-known sitter deposed that at the very moment when he was reproaching her for moving some object with her hand, another object, quite out of her reach, moved across the table. Her case is certainly a peculiar one, for it may be most truthfully said of her that no medium has ever more certainly been proved to have psychic powers, and no medium was ever more certainly a cheat upon occasions. Here, as always, it is the positive result which counts.

Eusapia had a peculiar depression of her parietal bone, due, it is said, to some accident in her childhood. Such physical defects are very often associated with strong mediumship. It is as if the bodily weakness caused what may be described as a dislocation of the soul, so that it is more detached and capable of independent action. Thus Mrs. Piper's mediumship followed upon two internal operations, Home's went with the tubercular diathesis, and many other cases might be quoted. Her nature was hysterical, impetuous and wayward, but she possessed some beautiful traits. Lombroso says of her that she had " a singular kindness of heart which leads her to lavish her gains upon the poor, and upon infants in order to relieve

their misfortunes, and which impels her to feel boundless pity for the old and the weak, and to lie awake at night thinking of them. The same goodness of heart drives her to protect animals that are being maltreated by sharply rebuking their cruel oppressors." This passage may be commended to the attention of those who think that psychic power savours of the devil.

CHAPTER XVI

GREAT MEDIUMS FROM 1870 TO 1900: CHARLES H. FOSTER—MADAME D'ESPERANCE—WILLIAM EGLINTON—STAINTON MOSES

THERE were many notable and some notorious mediums in the period from 1870 to 1900. Of these D. D. Home, Slade, and Monck have already been mentioned. Four others, whose names will live in the history of the movement, are the American, C. H. Foster, Madame d'Esperance, Eglinton, and the Rev. W. Stainton Moses. A short account of each of these will now be given.

Charles H. Foster is fortunate in having a biographer who was such an admirer that he called him "the greatest spiritual medium since Swedenborg." There is a tendency on the part of writers to exaggerate the claims of the particular sensitive with whom they have been brought in contact. None the less, Mr. George C. Bartlett in his "The Salem Seer" shows that he had close personal acquaintance with Foster, and that he really was a very remarkable medium. His fame was not confined to America, for he travelled widely and visited both Australia and Great Britain. In the latter country he made friends with Bulwer Lytton, visited Knebworth, and became the original of Margrave in "A Strange Story."

Foster seems to have been a clairvoyant of great power, and had the peculiar gift of being able to bring out the name or initials of the spirit which he described upon his own skin, usually upon his forearm. This phenomenon was so often repeated and so closely examined that there can be no possible doubt as to the fact. What may have been the cause of the fact is another matter. There were many points about Foster's mediumship which suggested an extended personality, rather than an outside intelligence. It is, for example, frankly incredible that the spirits of the great departed, such as Virgil, Camoens and Cervantes, should have been in attendance upon this unlearned New Englander, and yet we have Bartlett's authority for the fact, illustrated with many quotations, that he held conversations with such entities, who were ready to quote the context in any stanza which might be selected out of their copious works.

Such evidence of familiarity with literature far beyond the capacity of the medium bears some analogy to those book tests frequently carried out of late years, where a line from any volume in a library is readily quoted. They need not suggest the actual presence of the author of such a volume, but might rather depend upon some undefined power of the loosened etheric self of the medium, or possibly some other entity of the nature of a control who could swiftly gather information in some supernal fashion. Spiritualists have so overpowering a case that they need not claim all psychic phenomena as having necessarily their face value, and the author confesses that

he has frequently observed how much that has somewhere, some time, been placed on record in print or writing is conveyed back to us, though by no normal means could such print or writing be consulted at any time by the medium.

Foster's peculiar gift, by which initials were scrawled upon his flesh, had some comic results. Bartlett narrates how a Mr. Adams consulted Foster. "As he was leaving, Mr. Foster told him that in all his experience he had never known one individual to bring so many spirits . . . the room being literally packed with them, coming and going. About two o'clock the next morning Mr. Foster called to me . . . saying: 'George, will you please light the gas? I cannot sleep; the room is still filled with the Adams family, and they seem to me to be writing their names all over me.' And to my astonishment a list of names of the Adams family was displayed upon his body. I counted eleven distinct names; one was written across his forehead, others on his arms, and several on his back." Such anecdotes certainly give a handle to the scoffer, and yet we have much evidence that the sense of humour is intensified rather than dulled upon the Other Side.

The gift of blood-red letters upon Foster's skin would seem to compare closely with the well-known phenomenon of the stigmata appearing upon the hands and feet of devout worshippers. In the one case concentration of the individual's thoughts upon the one subject has had an objective result. In the other, it may be that the concentration from some invisible

entity has had a similar effect. We must bear in mind that we are all spirits, whether we be in the body or out, and have the same powers in varying degree.

Foster's views as to his own profession seem to have been very contradictory, for he frequently declared, like Margaret Fox-Kane and the Davenports, that he would not undertake to say that his phenomena were due to spiritual beings, while, on the other hand, all his sittings were conducted on the clear assumption that they were so. Thus he would minutely describe the appearance of the spirit and give messages by name from it to the surviving relatives. Like D. D. Home, he was exceedingly critical of other mediums, and would not believe in the photographic powers of Mumler, though those powers were as well attested as his own. He seems to have had in an exaggerated degree the volatile spirit of the typical medium, easily influenced for good or ill. His friend, who was clearly a close observer, says of him:

He was extravagantly dual. He was not only Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, but he represented half a dozen different Jekylls and Hydes. He was strangely gifted, and on the other hand he was woefully deficient. He was an unbalanced genius, and at times, I should say, insane. He had a heart so large indeed that it took in the world ; tears for the afflicted ; money for the poor ; the chords of his heart were touched by every sigh. At other times his heart shrunk up until it disappeared. He would become pouty, and with the petulance of a child would abuse his best friends. He wore out many of his friends, as an unbreakable horse does its owner. No harness fitted Foster. He was not vicious, but absolutely uncontrollable. He

would go his own way, which way was often the wrong way. Like a child he seemed to have no forethought. He seemed to live for to-day, caring nothing for to-morrow. If it were possible, he did exactly as he wished to do, regardless of consequences. He would take no one's advice, simply because he could not. He seemed impervious to the opinions of others, and apparently yielded to every desire ; but after all he did not abuse himself much, as he continued in perfect health until the final breaking up. When asked, "How is your health?" his favourite expression was, "Excellent. I am simply bursting with physical health." The same dual nature showed itself in his work. Some days he would sit at the table all day, and far into the night, under tremendous mental strain. He would do this day after day, and night after night. Then days and weeks would come when he would do absolutely nothing—turn hundreds of dollars away and disappoint the people, without any apparent reason, save he was in the mood for loafing.

Madame d'Esperance, whose real name was Mrs. Hope, was born in 1849 and her career extended over thirty years, her activities covering the Continent as well as Great Britain. She was first brought to the notice of the general public by T. P. Barkas, a well-known citizen of Newcastle. The medium at that time was a young girl of average middle-class education. When in semi-trance, however, she displayed to a marked degree that gift of wisdom and knowledge which St. Paul places at the head of his spiritual category. Barkas narrates how he prepared long lists of questions which covered every branch of science and that the answers were rapidly written out by the

medium, usually in English, but sometimes in German and even in Latin. Mr. Barkas, in summing up these séances, says :*

> It will be admitted by all that no one can by normal effort answer in detail critical and obscure questions in many difficult departments of science with which she is entirely unacquainted ; it will further be admitted that no one can normally see and draw with minute accuracy in complete darkness ; that no one can by any normal power of vision read the contents of closed letters in the dark ; that no one who is entirely unacquainted with the German language can write with rapidity and accuracy long communications in German ; and yet all these phenomena took place through this medium, and are as well accredited as are many of the ordinary occurrences of daily life.

It must be admitted, however, that until we know the limits of the extended powers produced by a liberation or partial liberation of the etheric body, we cannot safely put down such manifestations to spirit intervention. They showed a remarkable personal psychic individuality and possibly nothing more.

But Madame d'Esperance's fame as a medium depends upon many gifts which were more undoubtedly Spiritualistic. We have a very full account of these from her own pen, for she wrote a book, called "Shadow Land," which may rank with A. J. Davis's "Magic Staff" and Turvey's "The Beginnings of Seership," as among the most remarkable psychic autobiographies in our literature. One cannot read it

* *Psychological Review*, Vol. I, p. 224

without being impressed by the good feeling and honesty of the writer.

In it she narrates, as other great sensitives have done, how in her early childhood she would play with spirit children who were as real to her as the living. This power of clairvoyance remained with her through life, but the rarer gift of materialization was added to it. The book already quoted contained photographs of Yolande, a beautiful Arab girl, who was to this medium what Katie King was to Florence Cook. Not unfrequently she was materialized when Madame d'Esperance was seated outside the cabinet in full view of the sitters. The medium thus could see her own strange emanation, so intimate and yet so distinct. The following is her own description:

> Her thin draperies allowed the rich olive tint of her neck, shoulders, arms and ankles to be plainly visible. The long black waving hair hung over her shoulders to below her waist and was confined by a small turban-shaped head-dress. Her features were small, straight and piquant ; the eyes were dark, large and lively ; her every movement was as full of grace as those of a young child, or, as it struck me then when I saw her standing half shyly, half boldly, between the curtains, like a young roe-deer.

In describing her sensations during a séance, Madame d'Esperance speaks of feeling as if spiders' webs were woven about her face and hands. If a little light penetrated between the curtains of the cabinet she saw a white, misty mass floating about like steam from a locomotive, and out of this was evolved a human form. A feeling of emptiness began as soon

as what she calls the spider's web material was present, with loss of control of her limbs.

The Hon. Alexander Aksakof, of St. Petersburg, a well-known psychical researcher and editor of *Psychische Studien*, has described in his book, "A Case of Partial Dematerialization," an extraordinary séance at which this medium's body was partly dissolved. Commenting on this, he observes: "The frequently noted fact of the resemblance of the materialized form to that of the medium here finds its natural explanation. As that form is only a duplication of the medium, it is natural that it should have all her features."

This may, as Aksakof says, be natural, but it is equally natural that it should provoke the ridicule of the sceptic. A larger experience, however, would convince him that the Russian scientist is right. The author has sat at materializing séances where he has seen the duplicates of the medium's face so clearly before him that he has been ready to denounce the proceedings as fraudulent, but with patience and a greater accumulation of power he has seen later the development of other faces which could by no possible stretch of imagination be turned into the medium's. In some cases it has seemed to him that the invisible powers (who often produce their effects with little regard for the misconstructions which may arise from them) have used the actual physical face of the unconscious medium and have adorned it with ectoplasmic appendages in order to transform it. In other cases one could believe that the etheric double of the

medium has been the basis of the new creation. So it was sometimes with Katie King, who occasionally closely resembled Florence Cook in feature even when she differed utterly in stature and in colouring. On other occasions the materialized figure is absolutely different. The author has observed all three phases of spirit construction in the case of the American medium, Miss Ada Besinnet, whose ectoplasmic figure sometimes took the shape of a muscular and well-developed Indian. The story of Madame d'Esperance corresponds closely with these varieties of power.

Mr. William Oxley, the compiler and publisher of that remarkable work in five volumes entitled "Angelic Revelations," has given an account of twenty-seven roses being produced at a séance by Yolande, the materialized figure, and of the materialization of a rare plant in flower. Mr. Oxley writes:

> I had the plant (*ixora crocata*) photographed next morning, and afterwards brought it home and placed it in my conservatory under the gardener's care. It lived for three months, when it shrivelled up. I kept the leaves, giving most of them away except the flower and the three top leaves which the gardener cut off when he took charge of the plant.

At a séance on June 28, 1890, in the presence of M. Aksakof and Professor Butlerof, of St. Petersburg, a golden lily, seven feet high, is said to have been materialized. It was kept for a week and during that time six photographs of it were taken, after which it dissolved and disappeared. A photograph of it appears in "Shadow Land" (facing p. 328).

A feminine form, somewhat taller than the medium, and known by the name of Y-Ay-Ali, excited the utmost admiration. Mr. Oxley says: "I have seen many materialized spirit forms, but for perfection of symmetry in figure and beauty of countenance I have seen none like unto that." The figure gave him the plant which had been materialized, and then drew back her veil. She implanted a kiss on his hand and held out her own, which he kissed.

"As she was in the light rays, I had a good view of her face and hands. The countenance was beautiful to gaze upon, and the hands were soft, warm, and perfectly *natural*, and, but for what followed, I could have thought I held the hand of a permanent embodied lady, so perfectly natural, yet so exquisitely beautiful and pure."

He goes on to relate how she retired to within two feet of the medium in the cabinet, and in sight of all "gradually dematerialized by melting away from the feet upwards, until the head only appeared above the floor, and then this grew less and less until a white spot only remained, which, continuing for a moment or two, disappeared."

At the same séance an infant form materialized and placed three fingers of its tiny hand in Mr. Oxley's. Mr. Oxley afterwards took its hand in his and kissed it. This occurred in August, 1880.

Mr. Oxley records a very interesting experience of high evidential value. While Yolande, the Arab girl, was speaking to a lady sitter, "the top part of her white drapery fell off and revealed her form. I noticed

that the form was imperfect, as the bust was undeveloped and the waist uncontracted, which was a test that the form was not a lay figure." He might have added, nor that of the medium.

Writing on "How a Medium Feels During Materializations," Madame d'Esperance throws some light on the curious sympathy constantly seen to exist between the medium and the spirit form. Describing a séance at which she sat outside the cabinet, she says:*

And now, another small and delicate form appears, with its little arms stretched out. Someone at the far end of the circle rises, approaches it, and they embrace. I hear inarticulate cries, "Anna, oh, Anna, my child, my dear child!" Then another person rises and throws her arms around the spirit; whereupon I hear sobs and exclamations, mingled with benedictions. I feel my body moved from side to side; everything grows dark before my eyes. I feel someone's arms around my shoulders; someone's heart beats against my bosom. I feel that something happens. No one is near me; no one pays the slightest attention to me. Every eye is fixed upon that little figure, white and slender, in the arms of the two women in mourning.

It must be my heart that I hear beating so distinctly, yet, surely, someone's arms are around me; never have I felt an embrace more plainly. I begin to wonder. Who am I? Am I the apparition in white, or am I that which remains seated in the chair? Are those my arms around the neck of the elder woman? Or are those mine which lie before me on my lap? Am I the phantom, and if so, what shall I call the being in the chair?

Surely, my lips are kissed; my cheeks are moist with

* *Medium and Daybreak*, 1893, p. 46.

shock that she sustained at the so-called "exposure" when Yolande was seized by some injudicious researcher at Helsingfors in 1893. No one has expressed more clearly than she how much sensitives suffer from the ignorance of the world around them. In the last chapter of her remarkable book she deals with the subject. She concludes: "They who come after me may perchance suffer as I have done through ignorance of God's laws. Yet the world is wiser than it was, and it may be that they who take up the work in the next generation will not have to fight, as I did, the narrow bigotry and harsh judgments of the 'unco' guid.'"

Each of the mediums treated in this chapter has had one or more books devoted to his or her career. In the case of William Eglinton there is a remarkable volume, "'Twixt Two Worlds," by J. S. Farmer, which covers most of his activities.

Eglinton was born at Islington on July 10, 1857, and, after a brief period at school, entered the printing and publishing business of a relative. As a boy he was extremely imaginative, as well as dreamy and sensitive, but, unlike so many other great mediums, he showed in his boyhood no sign of possessing any psychic powers. In 1874, when he was seventeen years of age, Eglinton entered the family circle by means of which his father was investigating the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism. Up to that time the circle had obtained no results, but when the boy joined it the table rose steadily from the floor until the sitters had

to stand to keep their hands on it. Questions were answered to the satisfaction of those present. At the next sitting on the following evening, the boy passed into a trance, and evidential communications from his dead mother were received. In a few months his mediumship had developed, and stronger manifestations were forthcoming. His fame as a medium spread, and he received numerous requests for séances, but he resisted all efforts to induce him to become a professional medium. Finally, he had to adopt this course in 1875.

Eglinton thus describes his feelings before entering the séance room for the first time, and the change that came over him:

My manner, previous to doing so, was that of a boy full of fun ; but as soon as I found myself in the presence of the " inquirers," a strange and mysterious feeling came over me, which I could not shake off. I sat down at the table, determined that if anything happened *I* would put a stop to it. Something did happen, but I was powerless to prevent it. The table began to show signs of life and vigour; it suddenly rose off the ground and steadily raised itself in the air, until we had to stand to reach it. This was in full gaslight. It afterwards answered, intelligently, questions which were put to it, and gave a number of test communications to persons present.

The next evening saw us eagerly sitting for further manifestations, and with a larger circle, for the news had got widely spread that we had " seen ghosts and talked to them," together with similar reports.

After we had read the customary prayer, I seemed to be no longer of this earth. A most ecstatic feeling came over me, and I presently passed into a trance. All my

friends were novices in the matter, and tried various means to restore me, but without result. At the end of half an hour I returned to consciousness, feeling a strong desire to relapse into the former condition. We had communications which proved conclusively, to my mind, that the spirit of my mother had really returned to us. . . . I then began to realize how mistaken—how utterly empty and unspiritual—had been my past life, and I felt a pleasure indescribable in knowing, beyond a doubt, that those who had passed from earth could return again, and prove the immortality of the soul. In the quietness of our family circle . . . we enjoyed to the full extent our communion with the departed, and many are the happy hours I have spent in this way.

In two respects his work resembles that of D. D. Home. His séances were usually held in the light, and he always agreed willingly to any proposed tests. A further strong point of similarity was the fact that his results were observed and recorded by many eminent men and by good critical witnesses.

Eglinton, like Home, travelled a great deal, and his mediumship was witnessed in many places. In 1878 he sailed for South Africa. The following year he visited Sweden, Denmark, and Germany. In February, 1880, he went to Cambridge University and held sittings under the auspices of the Psychological Society. In March he journeyed to Holland, thence proceeding to Leipzig, where he gave sittings to Professor Zöllner and others connected with the University. Dresden and Prague followed, and in Vienna in April over thirty séances were held which were attended by many members of the aristocracy.

In Vienna he was the guest of Baron Hellenbach, the well-known author, who in his book, "Prejudices of Mankind," has described the phenomena that occurred there. After returning to England, he sailed for America on February 12, 1881, remaining there about three months. In November of the same year he went to India, and after holding numerous séances in Calcutta, returned in April, 1882. In 1883 he again visited Paris, and in 1885 was in Vienna and Paris. He subsequently visited Venice, which he described as "a veritable hotbed of Spiritualism."

In Paris, in 1885, Eglinton met M. Tissot, the famous artist, who sat with him and subsequently visited him in England. A remarkable materializing séance at which two figures were plainly seen, and one, a lady, was recognized as a relation, has been immortalized by Tissot in a mezzotint entitled "Apparition Médianimique." This beautiful, artistic production, a copy of which hangs at the offices of the London Spiritualist Alliance, shows the two figures illuminated by spirit lights which they are carrying in their hands. Tissot also executed a portrait etching of the medium, and this is to be found as the frontispiece to Mr. Farmer's book, "'Twixt Two Worlds."

A typical example of his early physical mediumship is described* by Miss Kislingbury and Dr. Carter Blake (Lecturer in Anatomy at Westminster Hospital):

Mr. Eglinton's coat-sleeves were sewn together behind his back near the wrist with strong white cotton ; the tying

* *The Spiritualist*, May 12, 1876, p. 221.

committee then bound him in his chair, passing the tape round his neck, and placed him close behind the curtain (of the cabinet) facing the company, with his knees and feet in sight. A small round table with various objects upon it was placed before the medium outside the cabinet and in view of the sitters ; the little stringed instrument known as the Oxford Chimes was laid inverted across his knees, and a book and a hand-bell were placed upon it. In a few moments the strings were played upon, though no visible hand was touching them, the book, the front of which was turned towards the sitters, opened and shut (this was repeated a great number of times, so that all present saw the experiment unmistakably), and the hand-bell was rung from within, that is, without being raised from the board. The musical box placed near the curtain, but fully in sight, was stopped and set going, while the lid remained shut. Fingers, and at times a whole hand, were now and then protruded through the curtain. An instant after one of these had appeared, Captain Rolleston was requested to thrust his arm through the curtain and ascertain whether the tying and sewing were as at first. He satisfied himself that they were, and the same testimony was given by another gentleman later on.

This was one of a series of experimental séances held under the auspices of the British National Association of Spiritualists, at their rooms, 38 Great Russell Street, London. Referring to these, *The Spiritualist* says : *

The test manifestations with Mr. Eglinton are of great value, not because other mediums may not obtain equally conclusive results, but because in his case they had been observed and recorded by good critical witnesses whose testimony will carry weight with the public.

* May 12, 1876.

At the beginning Eglinton's materializations were obtained in the moonlight, while all present sat round a table, and there was no cabinet. The medium, too, was usually conscious. He was induced to sit in the dark for manifestations by a friend who had been to a séance with a professional medium. Having thus started he was apparently obliged to continue, but stated that the results obtained were of a less spiritual character. A feature of his materializing séances was the fact that he sat among those present and that his hands were held. Under these conditions full-form materializations were seen in light which was sufficient for the recognition of those appearing.

In January, 1877, Eglinton gave a series of non-professional séances at the house, off Park Lane, of Mrs. Makdougall Gregory (widow of Professor Gregory, of Edinburgh). They were attended by Sir Patrick and Lady Colquhoun, Lord Borthwick, Lady Jenkinson, Rev. Maurice Davies, D.D., Lady Archibald Campbell, Sir William Fairfax, Lord and Lady Mount-Temple, General Brewster, Sir Garnet and Lady Wolseley, Lord and Lady Avonmore, Professor Blackie, and many others. Mr. W. Harrison (editor of *The Spiritualist*) describes one of these séances:*

Last Monday evening ten or twelve friends sat round a large circular table, with their hands joined, under which conditions Mr. W. Eglinton, the medium, was held on both sides. There were no other persons in the room than those seated at the table. An expiring fire gave a dim

* *The Spiritualist*, Feb. 23, 1877, p. 96.

light, permitting only the outlines of objects to be visible. The medium sat at that part of the table which was nearest to the fire, consequently his back was to the light. A form, of the full proportions of a man, rose slowly from the floor to about the level of the edge of the table ; it was about a foot behind the right elbow of the medium. The other nearest sitter was Mrs. Wiseman, of Orme Square, Bayswater. This form was covered with white drapery, but no features were visible. As it was close to the fire, it could be seen distinctly by those near it. It was observed by all who were so placed that the edge of the table or intervening sitters did not cut off the view of the form ; thus it was observed by four or five persons altogether, and was not the result of subjective impressions. After rising to the level of the edge of the table, it sank downwards, and was no more seen, having apparently exhausted all the power. Mr. Eglinton was in a strange house and in evening dress. Altogether it was a test manifestation which could not have been produced by artificial means.

One sitting described by Mr. Dawson Rogers showed remarkable features. It was held on February 17, 1885, in the presence of fourteen sitters, under test conditions. Though an inner room was used as a cabinet, Mr. Eglinton did not stay there, but paced about among the sitters, who were arranged in horse-shoe formation. A form materialized and passed round the room shaking hands with each one. Then the form approached Mr. Eglinton, who was partially supported from falling by Mr. Rogers, and, taking the medium by the shoulders, dragged him into the cabinet. Mr. Rogers says: "The form was that of a man taller by several inches and older than the

medium. He was apparelled in a white flowing robe, and was full of life and animation, and at one time was fully ten feet away from the medium."

Particular interest attaches to that phase of his mediumship known as Psychography, or slate-writing. With regard to this there is an overwhelming mass of testimony. In view of the wonderful results he obtained it is worthy of note that he sat for over three years without receiving a scratch of writing. It was from the year 1884 that he concentrated his powers on this form of manifestation, which was considered to be most suited to beginners, especially as all the séances were held in the light. Eglinton, in refusing to give a séance for materialization to a party of inquirers who had had no experience of this phase, wrote giving the following reason for his action: "I hold that a medium is placed in a very responsible position, and that he has a right to satisfy, as far as he possibly can, those who come to him. Now, my experience, which is a varied one, leads me to the conclusion that no sceptic, however well-intentioned or honest, can be convinced by the conditions prevailing at a materialization séance, and the result is further scepticism on his part, and condemnation of the medium. It is different when there is a harmonious circle of Spiritualists who are advanced enough to witness such phenomena, and with whom I shall always be delighted to sit; but a neophyte must be prepared by other methods. If your friend cares to come to a slate-writing séance I shall be happy to arrange an hour, otherwise I must decline to sit, for the reasons

stated above, and which must commend themselves to you as to all thinking Spiritualists."

In the case of Eglinton, it may be explained that common school slates were used (the sitter being at liberty to bring his own slates), and after being washed, a crumb of slate pencil was placed on the upper surface and the slate placed under the leaf of the table, pressed against it and held by the hand of the medium, whose thumb was visible on the upper surface of the table. Presently the sound of writing was heard, and on the signal of three taps being given, the slate was examined and found to contain a written message. In the same way two slates of the same size were used, bound tightly together with cord, and also what are known as box slates, to which a lock and key are attached. On many occasions writing was obtained on a single slate resting on the upper surface of the table, with the pencil between it and the table.

Mr. Gladstone had a sitting with Eglinton on October 29, 1884, and expressed himself as very interested in what took place. When an account of this sitting appeared in *Light* it was copied by nearly all the leading papers throughout the country, and the movement gained considerably by this publicity. At the conclusion of the séance Mr. Gladstone is reported as saying: "I have always thought that scientific men run too much in a groove. They do noble work in their own special lines of research, but they are too often indisposed to give any attention to matters which seem to conflict with their established modes of thought. Indeed, they not infrequently

attempt to deny that into which they have never inquired, not sufficiently realizing the fact that there may possibly be forces in nature of which they know nothing." Shortly afterwards Mr. Gladstone, while never professing himself to be a Spiritualist, showed his sustained interest in the subject by joining the Society for Psychical Research.

Eglinton did not escape the usual attacks. In June, 1886, Mrs. Sidgwick, wife of Professor Sidgwick, of Cambridge, one of the founders of the Society for Psychical Research, published an article in the *Journal* of the S.P.R. entitled "Mr. Eglinton,"* in which, after giving other people's descriptions from over forty séances for slate-writing with this medium, she says: "For myself, I have now no hesitation in attributing the performances to clever conjuring." She had no personal experience with Eglinton, but based her belief on the impossibility of maintaining continuous observation during the manifestations. In the columns of *Light*† Eglinton invited testimony from sitters who were convinced of the genuineness of his mediumship, and in a later special supplement of the same journal a very large number responded, many of them being members and associates of the S.P.R. Dr. George Herschell, an experienced amateur conjurer of fourteen years' standing, furnished one of the many convincing replies to Mrs. Sidgwick. The Society for Psychical Research also published minute accounts of the results obtained by Mr. S. J. Davey, who professed to obtain by trickery similar

* June, 1886, pp. 282–324. † 1886, p 309

and even more wonderful results in slate-writing than those occurring with Eglinton.* Mr. C. C. Massey, barrister, a very competent and experienced observer, and a member of the S.P.R., embodied the views of many others when he wrote to Eglinton in reference to Mrs. Sidgwick's article :

> I quite concur in what you say that she " adduces not one particle of evidence " in support of this most injurious judgment which is opposed to a great body of excellent testimony, only encountered by presumptions contrary, as it seems to me, to common sense and to all experience.

On the whole, Mrs. Sidgwick's rash attack on the medium had a good effect, because it called forth a volume of more or less expert testimony in favour of the genuineness of the manifestations occurring with him.

Eglinton, like so many other mediums for physical manifestations, had his " exposures." One of these was in Munich, where he had been engaged to give a series of twelve séances. Ten of these had proved very successful, but at the eleventh a mechanical frog was discovered in the room, and though the medium's hands were held, he was charged with fraud because the musical instruments, having been secretly blackened, black was afterwards found on him. Three months later a sitter confessed that he had brought the mechanical toy into the room. No explanation of the blackening was forthcoming, but the fact of the medium's hands being held should have been sufficient refutation.

* S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vol. IV, pp. 416–487.

A fuller knowledge since that time has shown us that physical phenomena depend upon ectoplasm, and that this ectoplasm is reabsorbed into the body of the medium carrying any colouring matter with it. Thus, in the case of Miss Goligher after an experiment with carmine, Dr. Crawford found stains of carmine in various parts of her skin. Thus, both in the case of the mechanical frog and of the lamp-black, it was, as so often happens, the " exposers " who were in the wrong and not the unfortunate medium.

A more serious charge against him was made by Archdeacon Colley, who declared* that at the house of Mr. Owen Harries, where Eglinton was giving a séance, he discovered in the medium's portmanteau some muslin and a beard, with which portions of drapery and hair cut from alleged materialized figures corresponded. Mrs. Sidgwick, in her article in the S.P.R. *Journal*, reproduced Archdeacon Colley's charges, and Eglinton, in his general reply to her, contents himself with a flat denial, remarking that he was absent in South Africa when the charges were published and did not see them until years after.

Discussing this incident, *Light* in a leading article† says that the charges in question were fully investigated by the Council of the British National Association of Spiritualists and dismissed on the ground that the Council could by no means get direct evidence from the accusers. It goes on:

* *Medium and Daybreak*, 1878, pp. 698, 730. *The Spiritualist*, 1879, Vol. XIV, pp 83, 135.

† 1886, p. 324.

Mrs. Sidgwick has suppressed very material facts in her quotation as printed in the *Journal*. In the first place the alleged circumstances occurred two years previous to the letter in which the accuser made his charge, during which time he made no public move in the matter, and only did so at all in consequence of personal pique against the Council of the late B.N.A.S. In the second place, the suppressed portions of the letter quoted by Mrs Sidgwick bear upon their face the mark of utter worthlessness. We affirm that no one accustomed to examine and weigh evidence in a scientific manner would have accorded to the correspondence the slightest serious attention without the clearest corroborative testimony.

None the less, it must be admitted that when so whole-hearted a Spiritualist as Archdeacon Colley makes so definite a charge, it becomes a grave matter which cannot be lightly dismissed. There is always the possibility that a great medium, finding his powers deserting him—as such powers do—should resort to fraud in order to fill up the gap until they return. Home has narrated how his power was suddenly taken from him for a year and then returned in full plenitude. When a medium lives on his work such a hiatus must be a serious matter and tempt him to fraud. However that may have been in this particular instance, it is certain, as has surely been shown in these pages, that there is a mass of evidence as to the reality of the powers of Eglinton which cannot possibly be shaken. Among other witnesses to his powers is Kellar, the famous conjurer, who admitted, as many other conjurers have done, that psychic phenomena far transcend the powers of the juggler.

STAINTON MOSES

There is no writer who has left his mark upon the religious side of Spiritualism so strongly as the Reverend W. Stainton Moses. His inspired writings confirmed what had already been accepted, and defined much which was nebulous. He is generally accepted by Spiritualists as being the best modern exponent of their views. They do not, however, regard him as final or infallible, and in posthumous utterances which bear good evidence of being veridical, he has himself declared that his enlarged experience has modified his views upon certain points. This is the inevitable result of the new life to each of us. These religious views will be treated in the separate chapter which deals with the religion of Spiritualists.

Besides being a religious teacher of an inspired type, Stainton Moses was a strong medium, so that he was one of the few men who could follow the apostolic precept and demonstrate not only by words but also by power. In this short account it is the physical side which we must emphasize.

Stainton Moses was born in Lincolnshire on November 5, 1839, and was educated at Bedford Grammar School and Exeter College, Oxford. He turned his thoughts towards the ministry, and after some years' service as a curate in the Isle of Man and elsewhere he became a master at University College School. It is remarkable that in the course of his *wanderjahre* he visited the monastery of Mount Athos, and spent six months there—a rare experience for an English Protestant. He was assured later that this marked the birth of his psychic career.

Whilst Stainton Moses was a curate he had an opportunity of showing his bravery and sense of duty. A severe epidemic of smallpox broke out in the parish which was without a resident doctor. His biographer says: "Day and night he was in attendance at the bedside of some poor victim who was stricken by the fell disease, and sometimes after he had soothed the sufferer's dying moments by his ministrations he was compelled to combine the offices of priest and grave-digger and conduct the interment with his own hands." It is no wonder that when he left he received a strongly worded testimonial from the inhabitants, which may be summed up in the one sentence, "The longer we have known you and the more we have seen of your work, the greater has our regard for you increased."

It was in 1872 that his attention was drawn to Spiritualism through séances with Williams and Miss Lottie Fowler. Before long he found that he himself possessed the gift of mediumship to a very unusual extent. At the same time he was prompted to make a thorough study of the subject, bringing his strong intellect to bear upon every phase of it. His writings, under the signature of "M.A. Oxon.," are among the classics of Spiritualism. They include "Spirit Teachings," "Higher Aspects of Spiritualism," and other works. Finally, he became editor of *Light*, and sustained its high traditions for many years. His mediumship steadily progressed until it included almost every physical phenomenon with which we are acquainted.

These results were not obtained until he had passed through a period of preparation. He says:

REV. W. STAINTON MOSES

From a portrait in the possession of the London Spiritualist Alliance

For a long time I failed in getting the evidence I wanted, and if I had done as most investigators do, I should have abandoned the quest in despair. My state of mind was too positive, and I was forced to take some personal pains before I obtained what I desired. Bit by bit, here a little and there a little, the evidence came, *as my mind opened to receive it.* Some six months were spent in persistent daily efforts to bring home to me proof of the perpetuated existence of human spirits and their power to communicate.

In Stainton Moses's presence heavy tables rose in the air, and books and letters were brought from one room into another *in the light.* There is independent testimony to these manifestations from trustworthy witnesses.

The late Serjeant Cox, in his book "What am I?" records the following incident which occurred with Stainton Moses:

On Tuesday, June 2nd, 1873, a personal friend, a gentleman of high social position, a graduate of Oxford, came to my residence in Russell Square, to dress for a dinner party to which we were invited. He had previously exhibited considerable power as a Psychic. Having half an hour to spare we went into the dining-room. It was just six o'clock and, of course, broad daylight. I was opening letters, he was reading *The Times.* My dining-table is of mahogany, very heavy, old-fashioned, six feet wide, nine feet long. It stands on a Turkey carpet, which much increases the difficulty of moving it. A subsequent trial showed that the united efforts of two strong men standing were required to move it one inch. There was no cloth upon it, and the light fell full under it. No person was in the room but my friend and myself. Suddenly, as we were sitting thus, frequent and loud rappings

came upon the table. My friend was then sitting holding the newspaper with both hands, one arm resting on the table, the other on the back of a chair, and turned sidewise from the table so that his legs and feet were not under the table but at the side of it. Presently the solid table quivered as if with an ague fit. Then it swayed to and fro so violently as almost to dislocate the big pillar-like legs, of which there are eight. Then it moved forward about three inches. I looked under it to be sure that it was not touched ; but still it moved, and still the blows were loud upon it.

This sudden access of the force at such a time and in such a place, with none present but myself and my friend, and with no thought then of invoking it, caused the utmost astonishment in both of us. My friend said that nothing like it had ever before occurred to him. I then suggested that it would be an invaluable opportunity, with so great a power in action, to make trial of *motion without contact*, the presence of two persons only, the daylight, the place, the size and weight of the table, making the experiment a crucial one. Accordingly we stood upright, he on one side of the table, I on the other side of it. We stood two feet from it, and held our hands eight inches above it. In one minute it rocked violently. Then it moved over the carpet a distance of seven inches. Then it rose three inches from the floor on the side on which my friend was standing. Then it rose equally on my side. Finally, my friend held his hands four inches over the end of the table, and asked that it would rise and touch his hand three times. It did so ; and then, in accordance with the like request, it rose to my hand, held at the other end to the same height above it, and in the same manner.

At Douglas, Isle of Man, during a Sunday in August, 1872, a remarkable exhibition of spirit power was given. The facts related by Stainton Moses are

corroborated by Dr. and Mrs. Speer, at whose house the phenomena occurred, and they lasted from breakfast-time until ten o'clock at night. Raps followed the medium wherever he went in the house and even at church he and Dr. and Mrs. Speer heard them while sitting in their pew. On returning from church Stainton Moses found in his bedroom that objects had been moved from the toilet table and laid on the bed in the form of a cross. He went to summon Dr. Speer to witness what had taken place, and on returning to the bedroom discovered that his collar, which he had removed a minute or so before, had in his absence been placed round the head of the improvised cross. He and Dr. Speer locked the door of the bedroom and adjourned to lunch, but during the course of the meal loud raps occurred and the heavy dining-table was moved three or four times. On a further inspection of the bedroom they found that two other articles from the dressing-case had been added to the cross. The room was again locked, and at three subsequent visits fresh objects had been added to the cross. We are told that on the first occasion there was no one in the house who was likely to play a trick, and that afterwards adequate precautions were taken to prevent such a thing from happening.

Mrs. Speer's version of this series of events is as follows:

During the time we were at church, raps were heard by each member of the circle in different parts of the pew in which we were all sitting. On our return Mr. S. M. found on his bed three things removed from his dressing-

table, and placed in the form of a cross on his bed. He called Dr. S. into his room to see what had taken place during our absence. Dr. S. heard loud raps on the foot-board of the bed. He then locked the door, put the key in his pocket, and left the room vacant for a time. We went to dinner, and during our meal the large dining-table, covered with glass, china, etc., repeatedly moved, tilted and rapped ; it seemed to be full of life and motion.

Raps accompanied the tune of a hymn our little girl was singing, and intelligent raps followed our conversation. We paid several visits to the locked-up room, and each time found an addition had been made to the cross. Dr. S. kept the key, unlocked the door, and left the room last. At last all was finished. The cross was placed down the centre of the bed ; all the dressing things had been used that our friend had in his travelling dressing-case. Each time we went into the room raps occurred. At our last visit it was proposed to leave a piece of paper and pencil on the bed, and when we returned again we found the initials of three friends of Mr. S. M.'s, all dead, and unknown to anyone in the house but himself. The cross was perfectly symmetrical, and had been made in a locked room that no one could enter, and was indeed a startling manifestation of spirit power.

A drawing showing the various toilet articles in their arranged form is given in Arthur Lillie's " Modern Mystics and Modern Magic " (p. 72). Further examples are given in the Appendix.

At his sittings with Dr. and Mrs. Speer many communications were received, giving proofs of the identity of the spirits in the form of names, dates, and places, unknown to the sitters, but afterwards verified.

A band of spirits is said to have been associated with his mediumship. Through them a body of

teaching was communicated by means of automatic writing, beginning on March 30, 1873, and continuing to the year 1880. A selection of them is embodied in "Spirit Teachings." In his Introduction to this book Stainton Moses writes :

> The subject-matter was always of a pure and elevated character, much of it being of personal application, intended for my own guidance and direction. I may say that throughout the whole of these written communications, extending in unbroken continuity to the year 1880, there is no flippant message, no attempt at jest, no vulgarity or incongruity, no false or misleading statement, so far as I know or could discover ; nothing incompatible with the avowed object, again and again repeated, of instruction, enlightenment and guidance by Spirits fitted for the task. Judged as I should wish to be judged myself, they were what they pretended to be. Their words were words of sincerity, and of sober, serious purpose.

A detailed account of the various persons communicating, many of them having renowned names, will be found in Mr. A. W. Trethewy's book, "The 'Controls' of Stainton Moses" (1923).

Stainton Moses aided in the formation of the Society for Psychical Research in 1882, but resigned from that body in 1886 in disgust at its treatment of the medium William Eglinton. He was the first president of the London Spiritualist Alliance, formed in 1884, a position he retained until his death.

In addition to his books "Spirit Identity" (1879), "Higher Aspects of Spiritualism" (1880), "Psychography" (2nd ed. 1882), and "Spirit Teachings" (1883), he contributed frequently to the Spiritualist

Press as well as to the *Saturday Review*, *Punch*, and other high-class journals.

A masterly summary of his mediumship was contributed to the "Proceedings" of the Society for Psychical Research by Mr. F. W. H. Myers.* In an obituary notice of him Mr. Myers writes: "I personally regard his life as one of the most noteworthy lives of our generation, and from few men have I heard at first hand facts comparable in importance for me with those which I heard from him."

The various mediums treated in this chapter may be said to cover the different types of mediumship prevalent during this period, but there were many who were almost as well known as those which have been quoted. Thus Mrs. Marshall brought knowledge to many; Mrs. Guppy showed powers which in some directions have never been surpassed; Mrs. Everitt, an amateur, continued throughout a long life to be a centre of psychic force; and Mrs. Mellon, both in England and in Australia, excelled in materializations and in physical phenomena.

* Vol. IX, pp. 245–353, and Vol. XI, pp. 24–113.

CHAPTER XVII

THE SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

ANY full account of the activities of the Psychical Research Society, with its strangely mingled record of usefulness and obstruction, would be out of place in this volume. There are some points, however, which need to be brought out, and some cases which should be discussed. In certain directions the work of the society has been excellent, but from the beginning it made the capital error of assuming a certain supercilious air towards Spiritualism, which had the effect of alienating a number of men who could have been helpful in its councils, and, above all, of offending those mediums without whose willing co-operation the work of the society could not fail to be barren. At the present moment the society possesses an excellent séance room, but the difficulty is to persuade any medium to enter it. This is as it should be, for both the medium and the cause he represents are in danger when misrepresentation and injurious charges are made as lightly as in the past. Psychical research should show some respect for the feelings and opinions of Spiritualists, for it is very certain that without the latter the former would not have existed.

Amid the irritations of what they regard as offen-

sive criticism Spiritualists must not forget that the society has at various times done some excellent work. It has, for example, been the mother of many other societies which are more active than itself. It has also nurtured a number of men both in London and in its American branch who have followed the evidence and have become whole-hearted advocates of the spirit view. Indeed, it is not too much to say that nearly all the bigger men, the men who showed signs of strong mentality apart from this particular subject, adopted the psychic explanation. Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Russel Wallace, Lord Rayleigh, Sir William Barrett, Professor William James, Professor Hyslop, Dr. Richard Hodgson, and Mr. F. W. H. Myers were all in different degrees on the side of the angels.

There had been a previous society of the same nature, the Psychological Society of Great Britain, which was founded in 1875 by Mr. Serjeant Cox. On the death of this gentleman in 1879 this society dissolved. On January 6, 1882, a meeting was held at the initiative of Sir William Barrett to consider the formation of a new society, and on February 20 it came into being. Professor Henry Sidgwick of Cambridge was elected President, and among the Vice-Presidents was the Rev. W. Stainton Moses. The Council included such representative Spiritualists as Mr. Edmund Dawson Rogers, Mr. Hensleigh Wedgwood, Dr. George Wyld, Mr. Alexander Calder, and Mr. Morell Theobald. We shall see in the course of our review of its history how the Society for Psychical

Research gradually alienated the sympathies of these members and caused many of them to resign, and how the cleavage thus early begun has gone on widening with the passage of the years.

A manifesto of the society sets out:

> It has been widely felt that the present is an opportune time for making an organized and systematic attempt to investigate that large group of debatable phenomena designated by such terms as mesmeric, psychical and Spiritualistic.

Professor Sidgwick, in his first presidential address to the society on July 17, 1882, speaking of the need for psychical research, said:

> We are all agreed that the present state of things is a scandal to the enlightened age in which we live, that the dispute as to the reality of these marvellous phenomena—of which it is quite impossible to exaggerate the scientific importance, if only a tenth part of what has been alleged by generally credible witnesses could be shown to be true—I say it is a scandal that the dispute as to the reality of these phenomena should still be going on, that so many competent witnesses should have declared their belief in them, that so many others should be profoundly interested in having the question determined, and yet that the educated world, as a body, should still be simply in an attitude of incredulity.

The attitude of the society, as thus defined by its first president, was a fair and reasonable one. Answering a criticism to the effect that their intention was to reject as untrustworthy the results of all previous inquiries into psychical phenomena, he said:

> I do not presume to suppose that I could produce

evidence better in quality than much that has been laid before the world by writers of indubitable scientific repute —men like Mr. Crookes, Mr. Wallace, and the late Professor De Morgan. But it is clear from what I have defined as the aim of the society, however good some of its evidence may be in quality, we require a great deal more of it.

The educated world, he pointed out, was not yet convinced, and thus more evidence must be piled up. He did not add that there was abundant evidence already but that the world had not yet troubled to examine it.

Returning to this aspect at the close of his address he said:

Scientific incredulity has been so long in growing, and has so many and so strong roots, that we shall only kill it, if we are able to kill it at all as regards any of those questions, by burying it alive under a heap of facts. We must keep "pegging away," as Lincoln said; we must accumulate fact upon fact, and add experiment upon experiment, and, I should say, not wrangle too much with incredulous outsiders about the conclusiveness of any one, but trust to the mass of evidence for conviction. The highest degree of demonstrative force that we can obtain out of any single record of investigation is, of course, limited by the trustworthiness of the investigator. We have done all that we can when the critic has nothing left to allege except that the investigator is in the trick. But when he has nothing else left he will allege that. . . . We must drive the objector into the position of being forced either to admit the phenomena as inexplicable, at least by him, or to accuse the investigators either of lying or cheating or of a blindness or forgetfulness incompatible with any intellectual condition except absolute idiocy.

The early work of the society was devoted to an experimental investigation of thought-transference, a subject which Sir William (then Professor) Barrett had brought before the British Association in 1876. After long and patient research it was considered that thought-transference, or telepathy, as it was named by Mr. F. W. H. Myers, was an established fact. In the domain of mental phenomena much valuable work has been done by the society, and this has been placed on record in a systematic and careful manner in the society's "Proceedings." Its researches, too, into what are known as "Cross Correspondences" constitute an important phase of its activities. The investigation of the mediumship of Mrs. Piper was also a notable work, to which we shall refer later.

Where the society has been less fortunate has been in its consideration of what are known as the physical phenomena of Spiritualism. Mr. E. T. Bennett, for twenty years the assistant secretary to the society, thus refers to this aspect:

> It is a remarkable thing, we are inclined to say one of the most remarkable things in the history of the society, that this branch of inquiry should have been—it is hardly an exaggeration to say—absolutely barren of result. It may also be said that the result has been barren in proportion to the simplicity of the alleged phenomena. As to the moving of tables and other objects without contact, the production of audible raps, and of visible lights, opinion, even within the society itself, to say nothing of the outside intelligent world, is in the same state of chaos as it was twenty years ago. The question of the movement of tables without contact is exactly in the state in which it

was left by the Dialectical Society in the year 1869. Even then, the fact of the movement of a heavy dining-room table, untouched by anyone present, and not in the presence of a professional medium, was attested by a number of well-known men. If it was "a scandal that the dispute as to the reality of these phenomena should still be going on," when Professor Sidgwick gave his first presidential address, how much more of a scandal is it that now, after the lapse of nearly another quarter of a century, "the educated world as a body should still be simply in an attitude of incredulity." In the whole series of volumes issued by the society, there is no light whatever thrown on these simple alleged phenomena of seeing and hearing. With regard to the higher physical phenomena which imply intelligence for their production, such as Direct Writing and Spirit Photography, some investigation has been made, but to a large extent, though not entirely, with negative results.*

These sweeping charges against the society are made by a friendly critic. Let us see how Spiritualists of that time viewed its activities. To start from near the beginning, we find early in 1883, a year after the formation of the society, a correspondent writing to *Light* asking, "What is the distinction between the Society for Psychical Research and the Central Association of Spiritualists?" and also inquiring whether there was any antagonism between the two bodies. The reply is given in a leading article† from which we make this extract. With our retrospect of forty years from that date it has an historic interest:

* "Twenty Years of Psychical Research," by Edward T. Bennett (1904), pp 21–2.

† *Light*, 1883, p. 54.

Spiritualists cannot doubt what the end will be—they cannot doubt that, as time goes on, the Society for Psychical Research will afford as clear and unquestionable proofs of clairvoyance, of spirit-writing, of spiritual appearances, and of the various forms of physical phenomena as they have so successfully afforded of thought-reading. But mean while there is a sharp line of distinction between the Society for Psychical Research and the Central Association of Spiritualists. The Spiritualists have a settled faith—nay, more, a certain knowledge—in regard to facts about which the Society for Psychical Research would not yet profess to have any knowledge whatever. The Society for Psychical Research are busy with phenomena only, seeking evidence of their existence. . . . To them the idea of spirit communion, of sweet converse with dear departed friends—so precious to Spiritualists—has no present interest. We speak of them, of course, as a Society—not of individual members. As a Society they are studying the mere bones and muscles, and have not yet penetrated to the heart and soul.

The editor, continuing, takes a dip into the future, though how distant a future it was destined to prove he could not see :

As a Society, they cannot yet call themselves Spiritualists. As a Society, they will, as their proofs accumulate, in all probability become—first, "Spiritualists without the spirits"—and ultimately very like other Spiritualists, with the added satisfaction that in reaching that position they have made good every step in their path as they went along, and have, by their cautious conduct, induced many noble and clever men and women to tread the same way with them.

In conclusion, the correspondent is assured tha

there is no antagonism between the two bodies, and that Spiritualists are confident that the Society for Psychical Research is doing a most useful work.

The extract is instructive, showing as it does the kindly feelings entertained by the leading Spiritualist organ towards the new society. The prophecy accompanying it, however, has been far from realized. In an exaggerated striving after what was considered to be an impartial, scientific attitude, a certain little group within the society has continued for many years to maintain a position, if not of hostility to, yet of persistent denial of, the reality of physical manifestations observed with particular mediums. It has mattered not what weight of testimony was forthcoming from trustworthy men whose qualifications and experience made them worthy of credence. As soon as the Society for Psychical Research came to consider such testimony, or, more rarely, to conduct an investigation for themselves, either open charges of fraud were levelled against the mediums or possibilities of how the results *might* have been obtained by other than supernormal means were suggested. Thus, we have Mrs. Sidgwick, who is one of the worst offenders in this respect, saying of a sitting with Mrs. Jencken (Kate Fox), held in light reported to be sufficient to read print by, when direct writing was obtained on a sheet of paper supplied by the sitters and placed under the table: "We thought that Mrs. Jencken might have written the word with her foot." Of Henry Slade: "The impression on my mind after about ten séances with Dr. Slade . . . is that the phenomena are

produced by tricks." Of William Eglinton's slate-writing: "For myself I have now no hesitation in attributing the performances to clever conjuring." One lady medium, the daughter of a well-known professor, described to the author how impossible, and indeed how unconsciously insulting, was the attitude of Mrs. Sidgwick on such an occasion.

Many further quotations to the same effect, and about other famous mediums, could be given, as already stated. A paper entitled "Mr. Eglinton," contributed by Mrs. Sidgwick to the society's *Journal* in 1886, caused a storm of angry criticism, and a special supplement of *Light* was devoted to letters of protest. In an editorial comment coming from Mr. Stainton Moses, this newspaper, which in the past had shown such uniform sympathy with the new body, writes:

> The Society for Psychical Research have in more than one direction placed themselves in a false position, and when their attention has been drawn to the fact, have allowed judgment to go by default. Indeed, the secret history of "Psychical Research" in England will, when written, prove a very instructive and suggestive narrative. Moreover, we regret to say that (and we say it with a full sense of the gravity of our words), as far as free and full discussion of these matters is concerned, their policy has been an obstructionist one. . . . In these circumstances, therefore, it rests with the Society for Psychical Research itself to decide whether the friction which now unfortunately exists shall be intensified, or whether a *modus vivendi* between themselves and the Spiritualistic body shall be established. No *official* disavowal of Mrs. Sidgwick's

views as being representative of the Society has, however, yet been made. That is assuredly the first step.

The situation here indicated in the fourth year of the existence of this society has continued with little alteration until the present day. We can see it well described by Sir Oliver Lodge,* who says of the society, while of course not agreeing with the dictum: "It has been called a society for the suppression of facts, for the wholesale imputation of imposture, for the discouragement of the sensitive, and for the repudiation of every revelation of the kind which was said to be pressing itself upon humanity from the regions of light and knowledge."

If this criticism be deemed too severe, it at least indicates the tone of a considerable body of influential opinion regarding the Society for Psychical Research.

One of the earliest public activities of the S.P.R. was the journey to India of their representative, Dr. Richard Hodgson, in order to investigate the alleged miracles which had occurred at Adyar, the headquarters of Madame Blavatsky, who had taken so prominent a part in resuscitating the ancient wisdom of the East and forming it, under the name of Theosophy, into a philosophic system which would be intelligible to and acceptable by the West. This is not the place to discuss the mixed character of that remarkable woman, and it may simply be stated that Dr. Hodgson formed a most adverse opinion of her and her alleged miracles. For a time it seemed that this conclusion was final, but later some reasons were

* "The Survival of Man" (1909), p. 6.

put forward for its reconsideration, the best epitome of which is to be found in Mrs. Besant's defence.* Mrs. Besant's chief point is that the witnesses were thoroughly malicious and corrupt, and that much of the evidence was clearly manufactured. The net result is that while this and similar episodes will always cast a shadow over Madame Blavatsky's record, it cannot be said that the particular case was finally established. In this as in other instances the society's standard of evidence, when it wishes to prove fraud, is very much more elastic than when it examines some alleged psychic phenomenon.

It is more pleasing to turn to the thorough examination of the mediumship of Mrs. Leonora Piper, the celebrated sensitive of Boston, U.S.A., for this ranks amongst the finest of the results achieved by the Society for Psychical Research. It was continued over a period of fifteen years, and the records are voluminous. Among the investigators were such well-known and competent men as Professor William James, of Harvard University, Dr. Richard Hodgson, and Professor Hyslop, of Columbia University. These three were convinced of the genuineness of the phenomena occurring in her presence, and all favoured the Spiritualistic interpretation of them.

The Spiritualists were naturally jubilant at this justification of their claims. Mr. E. Dawson Rogers, President of the London Spiritualist Alliance, at a gathering of that body on October 24, 1901, said :†

* "H P Blavatsky and the Masters of Wisdom." (Theosophical Publishing House.)

† *Light*, 1901, p. 523.

A little event has occurred during the past few days which it is thought calls for a few words from myself. As many of you know, our friends of the Psychical Research Society—or some of them—have come over to our camp. I do not mean to say they have joined the London Spiritualist Alliance—but I mean that some who laughed and scoffed at us a few years ago now proclaim themselves as adherents to our creed; that is, adherents to the hypothesis or theory that man continues to live after death, and that under certain conditions it is possible for him to communicate with those he has left behind.

Well, now, I have a somewhat painful memory of the early history of the Society for Psychical Research. I was, fortunately or unfortunately, a member of its first Council, as was also our dear departed friend W. Stainton Moses. We sat together and we were sadly distressed by the way in which the Council of the Society for Psychical Research received any suggestion about the possibility of demonstrating the continued existence of man after so-called death. The result was that, being unable to endure it any longer, Mr. Stainton Moses and I resigned our position on the Council. However, time has had its revenges. At that time our friends professed to be anxious to discover the truth, but they hoped, and strongly hoped, that the truth would be that Spiritualism was a fraud. . . .

Happily that time, and that attitude, have passed, and we can now regard the Society for Psychical Research as an excellent friend. It has gone assiduously and sedulously to work, and has proved our case—if it needed proving—up to the hilt. First of all we had our good friend Mr. F. W. H. Myers, whose memory we all cherish, and we do not forget that Mr. Myers stated plainly that he had come to the conclusion that the Spiritualistic hypothesis alone accounted for the phenomena he had himself witnessed. Then there is Dr. Hodgson. You

will remember, those of you who have been long acquainted with the subject, how earnestly he pursued all who professed Spiritualism. He was a very Saul persecuting the Christians. Yet he himself, by virtue of his investigations of the phenomena occurring in the presence of Mrs. Leonora Piper, came over to our side, and honestly and fearlessly declared himself a convert to the Spiritualistic hypothesis. And now within the last few days we have had a notable volume by Professor Hyslop, of the Columbia University, New York, and published by the Society for Psychical Research—a book of 650 pages, which shows that he too, a vice-president of the Society for Psychical Research, is convinced that the Spiritualistic hypothesis is the only possible hypothesis to explain the phenomena he has witnessed. They are all coming in, and I am beginning almost to have a hope of our good friend Mr. Podmore.

From our vantage ground of twenty odd years later, we see that this forecast was altogether too optimistic. But the work with Mrs. Piper stands beyond challenge.

Professor James became acquainted with Mrs. Piper in 1885, through hearing of the visit of a relative of his who obtained highly interesting results. Though he was rather sceptical, he determined to investigate for himself. He obtained a number of evidential messages. For instance, his mother-in-law had lost her bank-book, but Dr. Phinuit, Mrs. Piper's control, when asked to help in finding it, told her where it was, and the statement proved to be correct. On another occasion this control said to Professor James : " Your child has a boy named Robert F. as

a playfellow in our world." The F.s were cousins of Mrs. James and lived in a distant town. Professor James told his wife that Dr. Phinuit had made a mistake in the sex of the dead child of the F.'s, because he had said it was a boy. But Professor James was wrong; the child *was* a boy, and the information supplied was correct. Here there could be no question of reading the sitter's conscious mind. Many more examples of veridical communications could be given. Professor James describes Mrs. Piper as an absolutely simple and genuine person, and says of his investigation, " The result is to make me feel as absolutely certain as I am of any personal fact in the world, that she knows things in her trances which she cannot possibly have heard in her waking state."

After Dr. Richard Hodgson's death in 1905, Professor Hyslop obtained through Mrs. Piper a series of evidential communications which convinced him that he was indeed in touch with his friend and fellow-worker. Hodgson, for instance, reminded him of a private medium about whose powers the two men had differed. He said he had visited her, adding, " I found things better than I thought." He spoke of a coloured-water test which he and Hyslop had employed to test a medium five hundred miles distant from Boston, and about which Mrs. Piper could know nothing. There was also the mention of a discussion he had had with Hyslop about cutting down the manuscript of one of Hyslop's books. The sceptic may object that these facts were within the knowledge of Professor Hyslop, from whom Mrs. Piper obtained

them telepathically. But accompanying the communications there were many evidences of personal peculiarities of Dr. Hodgson which Professor Hyslop recognized.

To enable the reader to judge the cogency of some of the evidence given through Mrs. Piper under the Phinuit control, the following case is extracted:*

At the 45th English sitting [on Dec. 24, 1889], when Messrs. Oliver and Alfred Lodge and Mr. and Mrs. Thompson were the sitters, Phinuit suddenly said:

"Do you know Richard, Rich, Mr. Rich?"

MRS. THOMPSON: "Not well. I knew a Dr. Rich."

PHINUIT: "That's him. He's passed out. He sends kindest regards to his father."

At the 83rd sitting, when Mr. and Mrs. Thompson were again present, Phinuit said all at once: "Here's Dr. Rich!" upon which Dr. Rich proceeds to speak:

DR. RICH: "It is very kind of this gentleman" (i.e. Dr. Phinuit) "to let me speak to you. Mr. Thompson, I want you to give a message to father."

MR. THOMPSON: "I will give it."

DR. RICH: "Thank you a thousand times; it is very good of you. You see, I passed out rather suddenly. Father was very much troubled about it, and he is troubled yet. He hasn't got over it. Tell him I am alive—that I send my love to him. Where are my glasses?" (The medium passes her hands over her eyes.) "I used to wear glasses." (True.)

* *Proceedings* of S.P.R., Vol. VI, p. 509. Quoted in M. Sage's "Mrs. Piper and the S.P.R."

" I think he has them, and some of my books. There was a little black case I had—I think he has that, too. I don't want that lost. Sometimes he is bothered about a dizzy feeling in his head—nervous about it—but it is of no consequence."

MR. THOMPSON: " What does your father do ? "

The medium took up a card and appeared to write on it, and pretended to put a stamp in the corner.

DR. RICH: " He attends to this sort of thing. Mr. Thompson, if you will give this message, I will help you in many ways. I can, and I will."

Professor Lodge remarks about this incident: " Mr. Rich, senior, is head of Liverpool Post Office. His son, Dr. Rich, was almost a stranger to Mr. Thompson, and quite a stranger to me. The father was much distressed about his son's death, we find. Mr. Thompson has since been to see him and given him the message. He (Mr. Rich, senior) considers the episode very extraordinary and inexplicable, except by fraud of some kind. The phrase, ' Thank you a thousand times,' he asserts to be characteristic, and he admits a recent slight dizziness." Mr. Rich did not know what his son meant by " a black case." The only person who could give any information about it was at the time in Germany. But it was reported that Dr. Rich talked constantly about a black case when he was on his death-bed.

M. Sage comments, " No doubt Mr. and Mrs. Thompson knew Dr. Rich, having met him once. But they were quite ignorant of all the details here

given. Whence did the medium take them? Not from the influence left on some object, because there was no such object at the sitting."

Mrs. Piper had several controls at various stages of her long career. The original one was a Dr. Phinuit, who claimed to have been a French doctor, but whose account of his own earth life was contradictory and unsatisfactory. Apart from himself, however, his ministrations were most remarkable, and he convinced very many people that he was actually an intermediary between the living and the dead. Some of the objections to him, however, had force, for though it is quite possible that a prolonged experience of other-world conditions may take the edge off our earthly recollections, it is hardly conceivable that it could do so to the extent which was implied by the statements of this control. On the other hand, the alternative theory that he was a secondary personality of Mrs. Piper, a single strand, as it were, separated from the complete fabric of her individuality, opens up even greater difficulties, since so much was given which was beyond any possible knowledge on the part of the medium.

In studying these phenomena Dr. Hodgson, who had been among the most severe critics of all transcendental explanations, was gradually forced to accept the spiritual hypothesis as the only one which covered the facts. He found that telepathy from sitter to medium would not do so. He was much impressed by the fact that where the communicating intelligence had been deranged in mind before death, the after

messages were obscure and wild. This would be inexplicable if the messages were mere reflections from the memory of the sitter. On the other hand, there were cases, such as that of Hannah Wild, where a message sealed up in lifetime could not be given after death. While admitting the validity of such objections, one can but repeat that we should cling to the positive results and hope that fuller knowledge may give us the key which will explain those which seem negative. How can we realize what the laws are, and what the special difficulties, in such an experiment?

In March, 1892, the Phinuit control was largely superseded by the George Pelham control, and the whole tone of the communications was raised by the change. George Pelham was a young literary man who was killed at the age of thirty-two by a fall from his horse. He had taken an interest in psychic study, and had actually promised Dr. Hodgson that if he should pass away he would endeavour to furnish evidence. It was a promise which he very amply fulfilled, and the present author would wish to express his gratitude, for it was the study of the George Pelham records * which made his mind receptive and sympathetic until final proofs came to him at the time of the Great War.

Pelham preferred to write through Mrs. Piper's hand, and it was no unusual thing for Phinuit to be talking and Pelham to be writing at the same moment. Pelham established his identity by meeting thirty old friends who were unknown to the medium, recog-

* Dr. Hodgson's Report. *Proceedings* of S.P.R., Vol. XIII, pp. 284–582.

nizing them all, and addressing each in the tone which he had used in life. Never once did he mistake a stranger for a friend. It is difficult to imagine how continuity of individuality and power of communication—the two essentials of Spiritualism—could be more clearly established than by such a record. It is instructive that the act of communication was very pleasant to Pelham. "I am happy here, and more so since I find I can communicate with you. I pity those people who cannot speak." Sometimes he showed ignorance of the past. M. Sage, commenting upon this, wisely says: "If there is another world, spirits do not go there to ruminate on what has happened in our incomplete life: they go there to be carried away in the vortex of a higher and greater activity. If, therefore, they sometimes forget, it is not astonishing. Nevertheless, they seem to forget less than we do." *

It is clear that if Pelham has established his identity, then all that he can tell us of his actual experience of the next world is of the utmost importance. This is where the phenomenal side of Spiritualism gives way to the religious side, for what assurance from the most venerable of teachers, or of writings, can give us the same absolute conviction as a first-hand account from one whom we have known and who is actually leading the life which he describes? This subject is treated more fully elsewhere, and so it must suffice here to say that Pelham's account is, in the main, the same as that which we have so often received, and that it depicts a life of gradual evolution which is a continua-

* M. Sage. "Mrs. Piper and the S.P.R.," p. 98.

tion of earth life and presents much the same features, though under a generally more agreeable form. It is not a life of mere pleasure or selfish idleness, but one where all our personal faculties are given a very wide field of action.

In 1898 James Hervey Hyslop, Professor of Logic and Ethics at Columbia University, took the place of Dr. Hodgson as chief experimenter. Starting in the same position of scepticism, he in turn was forced by the same experiences to the same conclusions. It is impossible to read his records, which are given in his various books and also in Vol. XVI of the S.P.R. "Proceedings," without feeling that he could not possibly withstand the evidence. His father and many of his relatives returned and held conversations which were far beyond every alternative explanation of secondary personality or of telepathy. He does not beat about the bush in his conversation, but he says: "I have been talking with my father, my brother, my uncles," and everyone who reads his account will be forced to agree with him. How this society can have such evidence in its own "Proceedings," and yet, so far as the majority of its Council is concerned, remain unconverted to the spiritual view, is indeed a mystery. It can only be explained by the fact that there is a certain self-centred and limited—though possibly acute—type of mind which receives no impression at all from that which happens to another, and yet is so constituted that it is the very last sort of mind likely to get evidence for itself on account of its effect upon the material on which such evidence depends. In this

lies the reason for that which would otherwise be inexplicable.

No memory was too small or too definite for the father Hyslop to bring back to his son. Many of the facts had been forgotten and some never known by the latter. Two bottles upon his writing-desk, his brown penknife, his quill pen, the name of his pony, his black cap—people may describe such things as trivial, but they are essential in establishing personality. He had been a strict member of some small sect. Only in this did he seem to have changed. "Orthodoxy does not matter over here. I should have changed my mind in many things if I had known."

It is interesting to note that when on his sixteenth interview Professor Hyslop adopted the methods of the Spiritualists, chatting freely and without tests, he obtained more actual corroboration than in all the fifteen sittings in which he had adopted every precaution. The incident confirms the opinion that the less restraint there is at such interviews the more successful are the results, and that the meticulous researcher often ruins his own sitting. Hyslop has left it on record that out of 205 incidents mentioned in these conversations he has been able to verify no fewer than 152.

Perhaps the most interesting and dramatic conversation ever held through Mrs. Piper is that between her two researchers after the death of Richard Hodgson in 1905. Here we have two men of first-class brain—Hodgson and Hyslop—the one "dead," the

other with his full faculties, keeping up a conversation at their accustomed level through the mouth and hand of this semi-educated and entranced woman. It is a wonderful, almost an inconceivable situation, that he who had so long been examining the spirit who used the woman should now actually *be* the spirit who used the woman, and be examined in turn by his old colleague. The whole episode is worthy of careful study.*

So, too, is the succeeding message, alleged to be from Stainton Moses. The following passage in it should give thought to many of our more material psychic researchers. The reader can decide for himself whether it is likely to have had its origin in the mind of Mrs. Piper:

This thought we all wish to impress upon you and upon the friends on earth, that there is a difference between the entrance into the Spirit World of those who seek for spiritual unfolding and those who simply seek for scientific knowledge. Dr. Hodgson says that I shall tell you that it was a great error that he kept himself so largely attuned to material life and material things. You will understand he means that he did not move in the realm of the higher or spiritual. He did not view these psychic matters from the standpoint that I did. He sought to base everything mainly on material facts, and did not seek to interpret anything wholly as spiritual. One that comes over as he came over is transplanted from one sphere of life into another like a babe just born. He has been besieged since he is here with messages started from your side. All manner of questions are being carried to him by messengers. This is all in vain : he cannot answer. He repeats that

* "The Psychic Riddle." Funk, p. 58 and onwards.

I shall tell you he realizes now that he saw only one side of this great question, and that the lesser important.

Some description of this remarkable medium may interest the reader. Mr. A. J. Philpott says of her :

I found her a comely, well-built and healthy-looking woman of middle age, above the medium height, with brownish hair and a rather good-natured and matronly cast of countenance. She looked like a well-to-do woman without any particularly marked characteristics, either intellectual or otherwise. I had rather expected to find a different type of woman, somebody that would show more evidence of nerves ; this woman looked as calm and phlegmatic as a German *hausfrau*. She evidently never had bothered herself with metaphysical or any other kind of questions of a vague or abstract character. Somehow, she reminded me of a nurse I had seen in a hospital at one time—a calm, self-possessed woman.

Like many other great mediums, such as Margaret Fox-Kane, she was very agnostic as to the source of her own powers, which is the more natural in her case since she was always in deep trance, and had only second-hand accounts from which to judge what occurred. She was inclined herself to some crude and superficial telepathic explanation. As in the case of Eusapia Palladino, her mediumship came on after an injury to the head. Her powers seem to have left her as suddenly as they came. The author met her in New York in 1922, at which time she seemed to have completely lost all her personal gifts, though she still retained her interest in the subject.

The society has devoted an enormous amount of

patient work to the consideration of what are known as "cross correspondences." Many hundreds of pages in the society's "Proceedings" are given to this subject, which has aroused acute controversy.

It has been suggested that the scheme was originated on the Other Side by F. W. H. Myers as a method of communication that would eliminate that bugbear of so many psychic researchers—telepathy from the living. It is at least a certainty that while he was on earth Myers had considered the project in a simpler form, namely, to get the same word or message through two mediums.

But the cross correspondence of the S.P.R. is in the main of a much more complicated character. In this, one script is not a mere reproduction of statements made in another; the scripts seem rather designed to represent different aspects of the same idea, and often the information in one is explanatory and complementary of that in another.

Miss Alice Johnson, the Research Officer of the S.P.R., was the first to notice this link between the scripts. She cites this simple instance:

In one case, Mrs. Forbes's script, purporting to come from her son Talbot, stated that he must now leave her, since he was looking for a sensitive who wrote automatically, in order that he might obtain corroboration of her own writing.

Mrs. Verrall, on the same day, wrote of a fir tree planted in a garden, and the script was signed with a sword and suspended bugle. The latter was part of the badge of the regiment to which Talbot Forbes had belonged,

and Mrs. Forbes had in her garden some fir trees, grown from seed sent to her by her son. These facts were unknown to Mrs. Verrall.

Miss Johnson, who made a close study of the scripts coming through Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Forbes, Mrs. Verrall, Mrs. Willett, Mrs. Piper, and others, thus describes the conclusion to which she came:

The characteristic of these cases—or, at least, some of them—is that we do not get in the writing of one automatist anything like a mechanical verbatim reproduction of phrases in the other. We do not even get the same idea expressed in different ways—as might well result from direct telepathy between them. What we get is a fragmentary utterance in one script, which seems to have no particular point or meaning, and another fragmentary utterance in the other, of an equally pointless character; but when we put the two together, we see that they supplement one another, and that there is apparently one coherent idea underlying both, but only partially expressed in each.

She says*—what is by no means the fact, because hundreds of cases to the contrary can be cited—that:

The weakness of all well-authenticated cases of apparent telepathy from the dead is, of course, that they can generally be explained by telepathy from the living.

And she adds:

In these cross correspondences, however, we find apparently telepathy relating to the present—that is, the corresponding statements are approximately contemporaneous, and to events in the present which, to all intents and purposes, are unknown to any living person,

* S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vol. XXI, p. 375.

since the meaning and point of her script is often uncomprehended by each automatist until the solution is found through putting the two scripts together. At the same time we have proof of what has occurred in the scripts themselves. Thus it appears that this method is directed towards satisfying our evidential requirements.

The student who will undertake the immense labour of carefully examining these documents—they run into hundreds of printed pages—may perhaps be satisfied by the evidence presented.

But, as a matter of fact, we find that many able and experienced psychic researchers consider it unsatisfactory. Here are a few opinions on the subject.

Richet says:

> These are certainly well-marked cases of cryptesthesia, but whether there is cryptesthesia, or lucidity, or telepathy, these do not in any way imply survival of a conscious personality.*

It has to be remembered, however, that Richet is not an impartial controversialist, since an admission of Spirit would contradict all the teachings of his lifetime.

Dr. Joseph Maxwell is of the same school of thought as Richet. He says:

> It is impossible to admit the intervention of a spirit. We want proof of facts, and the system of cross correspondences is founded on negative facts and is an unstable foundation. Only positive facts have an intrinsic value, which cross correspondences cannot show, not at present, at any rate.

* "Thirty Years of Psychical Research."

It may be remarked that Maxwell, like Richet, has now come a long way towards the Spiritualistic position.

We find the matter discussed with fitting gravity in the London *Spectator*:

> Even if such things (i.e. cross correspondences of a complex type) were common, might it not be argued that they would only prove that some conscious being was producing them; that they would scarcely prove that the conscious being was "in the spirit"; that they would certainly not prove that he was the particular dead person that he claimed to be? A cross correspondence is a possible proof of organization, not of identity.

It is true that many able men like Sir Oliver Lodge and Mr. Gerald Balfour accept the evidence from cross correspondences. But if these satisfy only a comparative few, then their object has not been achieved.

Here are a few examples of the simpler kind taken from the S.P.R. "Proceedings." As anything from fifty to a hundred printed pages are devoted to a single one of the more complicated cases, it is difficult adequately to summarize them in a brief space, and it is impossible to exaggerate how wearisome they are to the reader in their entirety.

On March 11, 1907, at one o'clock, Mrs. Piper said in the waking stage:

"Violets."

On the same day at 11 a.m. Mrs. Verrall wrote automatically:

"With violet buds their heads were crowned."

" Violaceæ odores." (Violet-coloured scents.)

" Violet and olive leaf, purple and hoary."

" The city of the violet . . ."

On April 8, 1907, the alleged spirit of Myers, through Mrs. Piper, said to Mrs. Sidgwick:

" Do you remember Euripides? . . . Do you remember Spirit and Angel? I gave both . . . Nearly all the words I have written to-day are with reference to messages I am trying to give through Mrs. V."

Mrs. Verrall had, on March 7, in the course of an automatic script, the words " Hercules Furens " and " Euripides." And on March 25 Mrs. Verrall had written:

The Hercules play comes in there and the clue is in the Euripides play, if you could only see it . . . .

This certainly seems beyond coincidence.

Again, on April 16, 1907, Mrs. Holland in India produced a script in which came the words " Mors " and " The shadow of death."

On the following day Mrs. Piper uttered the word Tanatos (obviously a mispronunciation of *Thanatos*—being the Greek word for " death," as *Mors* is the Latin).

On April 29 Mrs. Verrall wrote a script wholly occupied with the idea of Death, with quotations from Landor, Shakespeare, Virgil, and Horace, all involving the idea of Death.

On April 30 Mrs. Piper, in the waking stage, repeated the word *Thanatos* three times in close succession.

Here again the theory of coincidence would seem to be far-fetched.

Another cross correspondence concerned with the phrase *Ave Roma immortalis* is a very lengthy one.

Mr. Gerald Balfour discussing it * says that the completed idea was a well-known picture in the Vatican.

Mrs. Verrall's script gave details of the picture unmeaning to herself, but made clear by the phrase *Ave Roma immortalis*, which came a few days later in Mrs. Holland's script.

An interesting feature was the apparent understanding by the control of what was being done.

On March 2, when the cross correspondence began, Mrs. Verrall wrote that she would have word sent "through another lady" that would elucidate matters. On March 7, when the cross correspondence ended, Mrs. Holland's contribution was followed by the words: "How could I make it any clearer without giving her the clue?"

Mr. Gerald Balfour considers, with reason, that these two comments show that this cross correspondence was being deliberately brought about.

Sir Oliver Lodge, in commenting on the way the meaning is ingeniously wrapped up in these cross correspondences, says of one of them:

> The ingenuity and subtlety and literary allusiveness made the record difficult to read, even when disentangled and presented by the skill of Mr. Piddington.

This criticism, from one who has been convinced

* S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vol. XXV., p. 54.

of their veridical character, is sufficient indication that cross correspondences are not likely to make anything more than a limited appeal. To the ordinary Spiritualist they seem an exceedingly roundabout method of demonstrating that which can be proved by easier and more convincing methods. If a man were to endeavour to prove the existence of America by picking up driftwood upon the European shores, as Columbus once did, instead of getting into touch with the land or its inhabitants, it would present a rough analogy to such circuitous methods of investigation.

Apart from the cross correspondence scripts, several others have been closely analysed by the S.P.R., the most remarkable and convincing being that which has been named "the Ear of Dionysius." It must be admitted that after the lowly and occasionally sordid atmosphere of physical phenomena these intellectual excursions do lift one into a purer and more rarefied atmosphere. The cross correspondences were too prolonged and complicated to ensure acceptance, and had a painful resemblance to some pedantic parlour game. It is otherwise with the Ear of Dionysius. It necessarily takes on an academic tone, since it is a classical subject, handled presumably by two professors, but it is a very direct and clear attempt to prove survival by showing that none save these particular men could have produced the script, and that certainly it was beyond the knowledge or faculties of the writer.

This writer, who chooses to assume the name of Mrs. Willett, produced in 1910 the phrase "Diony-

sius's Ear. The Lobe." It chanced that Mrs. Verrall, the wife of a famous classical scholar, was present, and she referred the phrase to her husband. He explained that the name was given to a huge abandoned quarry at Syracuse, which was roughly shaped like a donkey's ear. In this place the unhappy Athenian captives had been confined after that famous defeat which has been immortalized by Thucydides, and it had received its name because its peculiar acoustic properties were said to have enabled Dionysius the Tyrant to overhear the talk of his victims.

Dr. Verrall died shortly afterwards, and in 1914 the script of Mrs. Willett began to contain many references to the Ear of Dionysius. These appeared to emanate from the deceased doctor. For example, one sentence ran: "Do you remember that you did not know, and I complained of your classical ignorance? It concerned a place where slaves were kept and audition belongs—also acoustics. Think of the whispering gallery."

Some of the allusions, such as the foregoing, pointed to Dr. Verrall, while others seemed to be associated with another deceased scholar who had passed on in 1910. This was Professor S. H. Butcher, of Edinburgh. Thus the script said: "Father Cam walking arm-in-arm with the Canongate," i.e. Cambridge with Edinburgh. The whole strange mosaic was described by one control as "a literary association of ideas pointing to the influence of two discarnate minds." This idea was certainly carried out, and no one can read the result carefully without the conviction that it has its

origin in something entirely remote from the writer. So recondite were the classical allusions that even the best scholars were occasionally baffled, and one of them declared that no minds with which he was acquainted, save only those of Verrall and Butcher, could have produced the result. After careful examination of the records, Mr. Gerald Balfour declared that he was prepared to accept the reputed as "the real authors of this curious literary puzzle." The unseen communicators seem to have got weary of such roundabout methods and Butcher is represented as saying: "Oh, this old bothersome rubbish is so tiresome!" None the less, the result achieved is one of the most clear-cut and successful of any of the purely intellectual explorations of the S.P.R.

The work of the S.P.R. during recent years has not enhanced its reputation, and it is with reluctance that the author, who is one of the oldest members, is compelled to say so. The central machinery of the society has come into the hands of a circle of men whose one care seems to be not to prove truth but to disprove what seems preternatural. Two great men, Lodge and Barrett, stemmed the tide, but they were outvoted by the obstructionists. Spiritualists, and particularly mediums, look upon the investigators and their methods with aversion. It seems never to have dawned upon these people that the medium is, or should be, inert, and that there may be an intelligent force behind the medium which can only be conciliated and encouraged by gentle sympathy and thoughtful, tactful behaviour.

Eva, the materializing medium, came from France, but the results were meagre, and excessive exaggerated precautions defeated the end in view. The report in which the committee announce their conclusions is a contradictory document, for whereas the casual reader would gather from it that no results—or none worth recording—were obtained, the text is actually illustrated with photographs of ectoplasmic extrusions exactly resembling in miniature those which had been obtained in Paris. Madame Bisson, who accompanied her protégée to London, at great inconvenience to them both, was naturally indignant at such a result, and Dr. Geley published an incisive paper in the "Proceedings" of the Institut Métapsychique in which he exposed the fallacies of the investigation and the worthlessness of the report. Professors of the Sorbonne may be excused for handling Eva with no regard for psychic law, but the representatives of a scientific psychic body should have shown greater understanding.

The attack upon Mr. Hope, the psychic photographer, was examined by a strong independent committee and was shown to be quite unsound, and even to bear some signs of a conspiracy against the medium. In this ill-considered affair the society was directly implicated, since one of its officers took part in the proceedings, and the result was chronicled in the official *Journal*. The whole history of this case, and the refusal of the society to face the facts when they were pointed out to them, leave a shadow upon the record of all concerned.

Yet when all is said and done, the world has been the better for the existence of the S.P.R. It has been a clearing-house for psychic ideas, and a half-way house for those who were attracted to the subject and yet dreaded closer contact with so radical a philosophy as Spiritualism. There has been a constant movement among the members from the right of negation to the left of acceptance. The mere fact that a succession of the presidents have been professed Spiritualists is, in itself, a sign that the anti-spiritual element was not too intolerant or intolerable. On the whole, like all human institutions, it is open to both praise and censure. If it has had its dark passages, it has also been illuminated by occasional periods of brightness. It has constantly had to fight against the imputation of being a purely Spiritualistic society, which would have deprived it of that position of judicial impartiality which it claimed, but did not always exercise. The situation was often a difficult one, and the mere fact that the society has held its own for so many years is a proof that there has been some wisdom in its attitude; and we can but hope that the period of sterility and barren negative criticism may be drawing to an end. Meanwhile the Psychic College, an institution founded by the self-sacrificing work of Mr. and Mrs. Hewat McKenzie, has amply shown that a stern regard for truth and for the necessary evidential requirements are not incompatible with a human treatment of mediums, and a generally sympathetic attitude towards the Spiritualistic point of view.

CHAPTER XVIII

ECTOPLASM

FROM very early days Spiritualists have contended that there was some physical material basis for the phenomena. A hundred times in early Spiritual literature you will find descriptions of the semi-luminous thick vapour which oozes from the side or the mouth of a medium and is dimly visible in the gloom. They had even gone further and had observed how the vapour in turn solidifies to a plastic substance from which the various structures of the séance room are built up. More exact scientific observation could only confirm what these pioneers had stated.

To take a few examples: Judge Peterson states that in 1877 he saw with the medium W. Lawrence "a fleecy cloud" that seemed to issue from the side of the medium and gradually formed into a solid body.* He also speaks of a figure forming out of "a ball of light." James Curtis saw with Slade in Australia in 1878 a "cloud-like, whitish grey vapour" forming and accumulating, preparatory to the appearance of a fully materialized figure. Alfred Russel Wallace describes seeing with Dr. Monck, first a "white patch," which then gradually formed into a "cloudy

* "Essays from the Unseen."

pillar." This same expression, "cloudy pillar," is used by Mr. Alfred Smedley of an appearance with the medium Williams, when John King manifested, and he also speaks of it as "a slightly illuminated cloud." Sir William Crookes saw with the medium D. D. Home a "luminous cloud" which condensed into a perfectly formed hand. Mr. E. A. Brackett saw with the medium Helen Berry in the United States in 1885 "a small, white, cloud-like substance" which expanded until it was four or five feet high, "when suddenly from it the full, round, sylph-like form of Bertha stepped forward."* Mr. Edmund Dawson Rogers, in his narrative of a sitting with Eglinton in 1885, speaks of seeing emerging from the medium's side "a dingy, white-looking substance" that swayed and pulsated. Mr. Vincent Turvey, the well-known sensitive of Bournemouth, tells of "red, sticky matter" † drawn from the medium. Particular interest attaches to a description given by that wonderful medium for materialization, Madame d'Esperance, who says: "It seemed that I could feel fine threads being drawn out of the pores of my skin." ‡ This has an important bearing on the researches of Dr. Crawford, and his remarks on "psychic rods" and "spore-like matter." We find, too, in *The Spiritualist* that while the materialized spirit Katie King was manifesting herself through Miss Florence Cook, "She was connected with the medium by cloudy, faintly luminous threads." §

* "Materialized Apparitions," p. 106.
† "Beginnings of Seership," p. 55.
‡ "Shadow Land," p. 229.
§ *The Spiritualist*, 1873, p. 83.

As a pendant to these abbreviated references, let us give in detail three experiences of the formation of ectoplasm. One of the sitters in Madame d'Esperance's circle supplies the following description:

First a filmy, cloudy patch of something white is observed on the floor in front of the cabinet. It then gradually expands, visibly extending itself as if it were an animated patch of muslin, lying fold upon fold, on the floor, until extending about two and a half by three feet, and having a depth of a few inches—perhaps six or more Presently it begins to rise slowly in or near the centre, as if a human head were underneath it, while the cloudy film on the floor begins to look more like muslin falling into folds about the portion so mysteriously rising. By the time it has attained two or more feet it looks as if a child were under it, and moving its arms about in all directions, as if manipulating something underneath. It continues rising, sometimes sinking somewhat to rise again higher than before, until it attains a height of about five feet, when its form can be seen as if arranging the folds of drapery about its figure. Presently the arms rise considerably above the head and open outwards through a mass of cloud-like spirit drapery, and Yolande stands before us unveiled, graceful and beautiful, nearly five feet in height, having a turban-like head-dress, from beneath which her long black hair hangs over her shoulders and down her back. . . . The superfluous white, veil-like drapery is wrapped round her for convenience, or thrown down on the carpet, out of the way till required again. All this occupies from ten to fifteen minutes to accomplish.*

The second account is by Mr. Edmund Dawson Rogers.† He says that at the séance, exclusive of Mr.

* "Shadow Land," by E. d'Esperance (1897), pp. 254–5.

† "Life and Experience," p. 58.

Eglinton, the medium, there were fourteen persons present, all well known, and that there was sufficient light to enable the writer of the report "clearly to observe everybody and everything in the room," and when the "form" stood before him he was "distinctly able to note every feature." Mr. Eglinton in a state of trance paced about the room between the sitters for five minutes, and then—

He began gently to draw from his side and pay out at right angles a dingy, white-looking substance, which fell down at his left side. The mass of white material on the floor increased in breadth, commenced to pulsate and move up and down, also swaying from side to side, the motor power being underneath. The height of this substance increased to about three feet, and shortly afterwards the "form" quickly and quietly grew to its full stature. By a quick movement of his hand Mr. Eglinton drew away the white material which covered the head of the "form" and it fell back over the shoulders and became part of the clothing of the visitor. The connecting link (the white appearance issuing from the side of the medium) was severed or became invisible, and the "form" advanced to Mr. Everitt, shook hands with him, and passed round the circle, treating nearly everyone in the same manner.

This occurred in London in 1885.

The last description is of a séance in Algiers in 1905 with Eva C., then known as Marthe Béraud. Madame X. writes :*

Marthe was alone in the cabinet on this occasion. After waiting for about twenty-five minutes Marthe herself opened the curtain to its full extent and then sat down in her chair. Almost immediately—with Marthe in full

* "Annals of Psychical Science," Vol. II, p. 305.

view of the sitters, her hands, head, and body distinctly visible—we saw a white, diaphanous-looking thing gradually build itself up close to Marthe. It looked first of all like a large cloudy patch near Marthe's right elbow, and appeared to be attached to her body ; it was very mobile, and grew rapidly both upward and downward, finally assuming the somewhat amorphous appearance of a cloudy pillar extending from about two feet above the head of Marthe to her feet. I could distinguish neither hands nor head ; what I saw looked like white fleecy clouds of varying brilliancy, which were gradually condensing, concentrating themselves around some—to me invisible—body.

Here we have an account which tallies in a wonderful way with those we have quoted from séances many years previously.

When we examine the descriptions of the appearance of ectoplasm in Spiritualistic circles forty and fifty years ago, and compare them with those in our own day, we see how much richer were the earlier results. Then " unscientific " methods were in vogue, according to the view of many modern psychical researchers. At least, however, the earlier researchers observed one golden rule. They surrounded the medium with an atmosphere of love and sympathy. Discussing the first materializations that occurred in England, *The Spiritualist* in a leading article* says :

The influence of the spiritual state of the observers finds optical expression at face séances. Worldly and suspicious people get the feebler manifestations ; the spirits then have often a pale ghastly look, as usual when the power is weak. [This is a singularly exact description

* 1873, pp. 82–3.

of many of the faces at séances with Eva C.] Spiritual people, in whose presence the medium feels thoroughly happy, see by far the finest manifestations. . . . Although spiritual phenomena are governed by fixed laws, those laws so work in practice that Spiritualism undoubtedly partakes much of the character of a special revelation to special people.

Mr. E. A. Brackett, author of that remarkable book, "Materialized Apparitions," expresses the same truth in another way. His view will, of course, excite derision in so-called scientific circles, but it embodies a deep truth. It is the spirit of his words rather than their literal interpretation that he means to convey :

The key that unlocks the glories of another life is pure affection, simple and confiding as that which prompts the child to throw its arms around its mother's neck. To those who pride themselves upon their intellectual attainments, this may seem to be a surrender of the exercise of what they call the higher faculties. So far from this being the case, I can truly say that until I adopted this course, sincerely and without reservation, I learned nothing about these things. Instead of clouding my reason and judgment, it opened my mind to a clearer and more intelligent perception of what was passing before me. That spirit of gentleness, of loving kindness, which more than anything else crowns with eternal beauty the teachings of the Christ, should find its full expression in our association with these beings.

If anyone should think from this passage that the author was a poor, credulous fool upon whom any fraudulent medium could easily impose, a perusal of his excellent book will quickly prove the contrary.

Moreover, his method worked. He had been struggling with doubt and perplexity, when, on the advice tendered by a materialized spirit, he decided to lay aside all reserve and "greet these forms as dear departed friends who had come from afar and had struggled hard to reach me." The change was instantaneous.

> From that moment the forms, which had seemed to lack vitality, became animated with marvellous strength. They sprang forward to greet me; tender arms were clasped around me; forms that had been almost dumb during my investigations now talked freely; faces that had worn more the character of a mask than of real life now glowed with beauty. What claimed to be my niece . . . overwhelmed me with demonstrations of regard. Throwing her arms around me, and laying her head upon my shoulder, she looked up and said "Now we can all come so near you."

It is a thousand pities that Eva C. could not have had a chance to display her powers in the loving atmosphere of an old-fashioned Spiritualist séance. It is quite certain that a very different order of materializations would have been the result. As a proof of this Madame Bisson, in a private family circle with her, secured wonderful results never obtained with the thumb-screw methods of scientific investigators.

The first materializing medium who can be said to have been investigated with scientific care was this girl Eva, or Eva C., as she is usually described, her second name being Carriere. In 1903 she was examined in a series of sittings at the Villa Carmen in

Algiers by Professor Charles Richet, and it was his observation of the curious white material which seemed to be extruded from her person which led to his coining the word "ectoplasm." Eva was then in her nineteenth year and at the height of her powers, which were gradually sapped by long years of constrained investigation. Some attempt was made to cast doubt upon Richet's results and to pretend that the materialized figures were in truth some domestic in disguise, but the final answer is that the experiments were carried on behind locked doors, and that similar results have been obtained many times since. It is only poetic justice that Professor Richet should have been subjected to this unfair and annoying criticism, for in his great book, "Thirty Years of Psychical Research," he is most unfair to mediums, believing every tale to their discredit, and acting continually upon the principle that to be accused is the same thing as to be condemned.

In his first reports, published in the "Annals of Psychical Science," Richet describes at great length the appearance with the medium Eva C. of the materialized form of a man who called himself "Bien Boa." The professor says that this form possessed all the attributes of life. "It walks, speaks, moves, and breathes like a human being. Its body is resistant, and has a certain muscular strength. It is neither a lay figure nor a doll, nor an image reflected by a mirror; it is as a living being; it is as a living man; and there are reasons for resolutely setting aside every other supposition than one or the other of these two

MADAME JULIETTE BISSON
A pioneer of Ectoplasmic Research

hypotheses: either that of a phantom having the attributes of life; or that of a living person playing the part of a phantom." * He discusses in detail his reasons for dismissing the possibility of it being a case of impersonation.

Describing the disappearance of the form, he writes:

Bien Boa tries, as it seems to me, to come among us, but he has a limping, hesitating gait. I could not say whether he walks or glides. At one moment he reels as though about to fall, limping with one leg, which seems unable to support him (I give my own impression). Then he goes towards the opening of the curtains. Then without, as far as I believe, opening the curtains, he suddenly sinks down, disappears into the ground, and at the same time a sound of "Clac! clac!" is heard like the noise of a body thrown on to the ground.

While this was taking place the medium in the cabinet was plainly seen by another sitter, Gabriel Delanne, editor of the *Revue du Spiritisme*.

Richet continues:

A very little time afterwards (two, three or four minutes) at the very feet of the General, in the opening of the curtains, we again see the same white ball (his head ?) on the ground; it mounts rapidly, quite straight, *rises to the height of a man*, then suddenly sinks down to the ground, with the same noise, "Clac! clac!" of a body falling on to the ground. The General felt the shock of the limbs, which in falling struck his leg with some violence.

The sudden appearance and disappearance of the figure so much resembled action through a trap-door

* "Annals of Psychical Science," Vol. II, p. 273.

that next day Richet made a minute examination of the stone-flagged floor, and also of the roof of the coach-house underneath, without finding a trace of any trap-door. To allay absurd rumours of its existence, he afterwards obtained a certificate from the architect.

The interest of these records of the early manifestations is increased from the fact that at this time the medium obtained complete materializations, while at a later date in Paris these were extremely rare at her séances.

A curious experiment with Bien Boa was in trying to get him to breathe into a flask of baryta water to see if the breath would show carbon dioxide. With difficulty the form did as he was asked, and the liquid showed the expected reaction. During this experiment the forms of the medium and a native girl who sat with her in the cabinet were clearly seen.

Richet records an amusing incident during this experiment. When the baryta water was turned white, the sitters shouted, " Bravo ! " at which the form of Bien Boa appeared three times at the opening of the curtain, and bowed, like an actor in a theatre taking a call.

Richet and Delanne took many photographs of Bien Boa, and these Sir Oliver Lodge described as the best of the kind he had seen. A striking feature about them is that an arm of the medium presents a flat appearance, pointing to the process of partial dematerialization so well observed with another medium,

Madame d'Esperance. Richet acutely observes :* "I am not afraid of saying that the emptiness of this sleeve, far from demonstrating the presence of fraud, establishes on the contrary that there was no fraud; also that it seems to speak in favour of a sort of material disaggregation of the medium which she herself was incapable of suspecting."

In his last book, already referred to, Richet publishes for the first time an account of a splendid materialization he saw at the Villa Carmen.

Almost as soon as the curtains were drawn, they were reopened, and between them appeared the face of a young and beautiful woman with a kind of gilt ribbon or diadem covering her fair hair and the crown of her head. She was laughing heartily and seemed greatly amused ; I can still vividly recall her laugh and her pearly teeth. She appeared two or three times showing her head and then hiding it, like a child playing bo-peep.

He was told to bring scissors the next day, when he would be permitted to cut a lock of the hair of this Egyptian queen, as she was termed. He did so.

The Egyptian queen returned, but only showed the crown of her head with very fair and very abundant hair ; she was anxious to know if I had brought the scissors. I then took a handful of her long hair, but I could scarcely distinguish the face that she kept concealed behind the curtain. As I was about to cut a lock high up, a firm hand behind the curtain lowered mine so that I cut only about six inches from the end. As I was rather slow about doing this, she said in a low voice, "Quick ! Quick !" and disappeared. I have kept this lock ; it is very fine,

* "Annals of Psychical Science," Vol. II, p. 288.

silky and undyed. Microscopical examination shows it to be real hair ; and I am informed that a wig of the same would cost a thousand francs. Marthe's hair is very dark and she wears her hair rather short.*

Reference may be made, in passing, to what Professor Richet calls "ignoble newspaper tales" of an alleged confession of deceit by the medium, and also to the assertion of an Arab coachman in the employ of General Noel, who pretended that he had played the part of the ghost at the Villa Carmen. As regards the latter, the man was never on any occasion admitted into the séance room, while as to the former the medium has herself publicly denied the charge. Richet observes that even if the charge were true, psychic researchers were aware of what value to attach to such revelations, which only showed the instability of mediums.

Richet sums up:

> The materializations given by Marthe Béraud are of the highest importance. They have presented numerous facts illustrating the general *processus* of materializations, and have supplied metapsychic science with entirely new and unforeseen data.

This is his final reasoned judgment.

The first prolonged systematic investigation of ectoplasm was undertaken by a French lady, Madame Bisson, the widow of Adolphe Bisson, a well-known public man. It is probable that Madame Bisson will take a place beside her compatriot Madame Curie in the annals of science. Madame Bisson acquired con-

* "Thirty Years of Psychical Research," p. 508.

siderable personal influence over Eva, who had after the Algiers experiments been subjected to the usual intolerant persecution. She took her into her care and provided for her in all ways. She then began a series of experiments which lasted for five years, and which gave such solid results that not one, but several, sciences may in the future take their origin from them. In these experiments she associated herself with Dr. Schrenck Notzing, a German savant from Munich, whose name will also be imperishably connected with the original investigation of ectoplasm. Their studies were carried on between 1908 and 1913, and are recorded in her book "Les Phénomènes dits de Matérialisation" and in Schrenck Notzing's "Phenomena of Materialisation," which has been translated into English.

Their method was to make Eva C. change all her garments under supervision, and to dress her in a gown which had no buttons and was fastened at the back. Only her hands and feet were free. She was then taken into the experimental room, to which she had access at no other time. At one end of this room was a small space shut in by curtains at the back and sides and top, but open in front. This was called the cabinet and the object of it was to concentrate the ectoplasmic vapour.

In describing their joint results the German savant says: "We have very often been able to establish that by an unknown biological process there comes from the body of the medium a material, at first semi-fluid, which possesses some of the properties

of a living substance, notably that of the power of change, of movement, and of the assumption of definite forms." He adds: "One might doubt the truth of these facts if they had not been verified hundreds of times in the course of laborious tests under varied and very strict conditions." Could there be, so far as this substance is concerned, a more complete vindication of those early Spiritualists who for two generations had borne with patience the ridicule of the world? Schrenck Notzing ends his dignified preface by exhorting his fellow-worker to take heart. "Do not allow yourself to be discouraged in your efforts to open a new domain for science either by foolish attacks, by cowardly calumnies, by the misrepresentation of facts, by the violence of the malevolent, or by any sort of intimidation. Advance always along the path that you have opened, thinking of the words of Faraday, 'Nothing is too amazing to be true.'"

The results are among the most notable of any series of investigations of which we have record. It was testified by numerous competent witnesses, and confirmed by photographs, that there oozed from the medium's mouth, ears, nose, eyes, and skin this extraordinary gelatinous material. The pictures are strange and repulsive, but many of Nature's processes seem so in our eyes. You can see this streaky, viscous stuff hanging like icicles from the chin, dripping down on to the body, and forming a white apron over the front, or projecting in shapeless lumps from the orifices of the face. When touched, or when undue light came

upon it, it writhed back into the body as swiftly and stealthily as the tentacles of a hidden octopus. If it was seized and pinched the medium cried aloud. It would protrude through clothes and vanish again, leaving hardly any trace upon them. With the assent of the medium, a small piece was amputated. It dissolved in the box in which it was placed as snow would have done, leaving moisture and some large cells which might have come from a fungus. The microscope also disclosed epithelial cells from the mucous membrane in which the stuff seemed to originate.

The production of this strange ectoplasm is enough in itself to make such experiments revolutionary and epoch-making, but what follows is far stranger, and will answer the question in every reader's mind, "What has all this to do with spirits?" Utterly incredible as it may appear, this substance after forming begins, in the case of some mediums—Eva being one—to curdle into definite shapes, and those shapes are human limbs and human faces, seen at first in two dimensions upon the flat, and then moulding themselves at the edges until they become detached and complete. Very many of the photographs exhibit these strange phantoms, which are often much smaller than life. Some of these faces probably represent thought-forms from the brain of Eva taking visible form, and a clear resemblance has been traced between some of them and pictures which she may have seen and stored in the memory. One, for example, looks like an extremely rakish President Wilson with a moustache, while another resembles a

ferocious rendering of M. Poincaré. One of them shows the word "Miroir" printed over the head of the medium, which some critics have claimed as showing that she had smuggled in the journal of that name in order to exhibit it, though what the object of such a proceeding could be has not been explained. Her own explanation was that the controlling forces had in some way, possibly by "apport," brought in the legend in order to convey the idea that these faces and figures are not their real selves, but their selves as seen in a mirror.

Even now the reader may see no obvious connexion with Spiritualism, but the next stage takes us all the way. When Eva is at her best, and it occurs only at long intervals and at some cost to her own health, there forms a complete figure; this figure is moulded to resemble some deceased person, the cord which binds it to the medium is loosened, a personality which either is or pretends to be that of the dead takes possession of it, and the breath of life is breathed into the image so that it moves and talks and expresses the emotions of the spirit within. The last word of the Bisson record is: "Since these séances, and on numerous occasions, the entire phantom has shown itself, it has come out of the cabinet, has begun to speak, and has reached Mme. Bisson, whom it has embraced on the cheek. The sound of the kiss was audible." Was there ever a stranger finale of a scientific investigation? It may serve to illustrate how impossible it is for even the cleverest of materialists to find any explanation of such facts which is consistent with his theories. The

only one which Mr. Joseph McCabe, in his recent public debate, could put forward was that it was a case of the regurgitation of food! He seemed to be unaware that a close-meshed veil was worn over the medium's face in some of the experiments, without in the least hampering the flow of the ectoplasm.

These results, though checked in all possible ways, are none the less so amazing that the inquirer had a right to suspend judgment until they were confirmed. But this has now been fully done. Dr. Schrenck Notzing returned to Munich, and there he was fortunate enough to find another medium, a Polish lady, who possessed the faculty of materialization. With her he conducted a series of experiments which he has recorded in the book, already mentioned. Working with Stanislawa, the Polish medium, and adopting the same strict methods as with Eva, he produced exactly the same results. His book overlaps that of Mme. Bisson, since he gives an account of the Paris experiments, but the most important part is the corroboration furnished by his check experiments in the summer of 1912 in Munich. The various photographs of the ectoplasm, so far as they go, are hardly to be distinguished from those already taken, so that any theory of elaborate fraud upon the part of Eva postulates the same fraud on the part of Stanislawa. Many German observers checked the sittings.

In his thorough Teutonic fashion Schrenck Notzing goes deeper into the matter than Mme. Bisson. He obtained hair from one of the materialized forms and compared it microscopically with hair from Eva

(this incident occurred in the French series), showing by several tests that it could not be from the same person. He gave also the chemical result of an examination of a small portion of ectoplasm, which burned to an ash, leaving a smell as of horn. Chloride of sodium (common salt) and phosphate of calcium were amongst the constituents. Finally, he actually obtained a cinematograph record of the ectoplasm pouring from the mouth of the medium. Part of this is reproduced in his book.

It should be explained that though the medium was in a trance during these experiments she was by no means inanimate. A separate personality seemed to possess her, which might be explained as one of her own secondary individualities, or as an actual obsession from outside. This personality was in the habit of alluding with some severity to the medium, telling Mme. Bisson that she needed discipline and had to be kept up to her work. Occasionally this person showed signs of clairvoyance, explaining correctly, for example, what was amiss with an electric fitting when it failed to work. A running accompaniment of groans and protests from Eva's body seems to have been a mere animal outcry apart from intelligence.

These results were corroborated once again by Dr. Gustave Geley, whose name will live for ever in the annals of psychical research. Dr. Geley was a general practitioner at Annecy, where he fulfilled the high promises which had been given by his academic career at Lyons. He was attracted by the dawning science, and was wisely appointed by M. Jean Meyer

DR. GUSTAVE GELEY

Late Head of the Institut Metapsychique of Paris. A pioneer of Psychic Research

as head of the Institut Métapsychique. His work and methods will be an example for all time to his followers, and he soon showed that he was not only an ingenious experimenter and a precise observer, but a deep-thinking philosopher. His great book, "From the Unconscious to the Conscious," will probably stand the test of time. He was assailed by the usual human mosquitoes who annoy the first pioneers who push through any fresh jungle of thought, but he met them with bravery and good humour. His death was sudden and tragic. He had been to Warsaw, and had obtained some fresh ectoplasmic moulds from the medium Kluski. Unhappily, the aeroplane in which he travelled crashed, and Geley was killed—an irreparable loss to psychic science.

The committee of the Institut Métapsychique, which was recognized by the French Government as being "of public utility," included Professor Charles Richet, Professor Santoliquido, Minister of Public Health, Italy; Count de Gramont, of the Institute of France; Dr. Calmette, Medical Inspector-General; M. Camille Flammarion, M. Jules Roche, ex-Minister of State; Dr. Treissier, Hospital of Lyons; with Dr. Gustave Geley himself as Director. Among those added to the committee at a later date were Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor Bozzano, and Professor Leclainche, member of the Institute of France and Inspector-General of Sanitary Services (Agriculture). The Institute is equipped with a good laboratory for psychical research, and has also a library, reading-room, lecture and reception rooms. Particulars of the work carried

out are supplied in its magazine, entitled *La Revue Métapsychique.*

An important side of the work of the Institute has been to invite public men of eminence in science and literature to witness for themselves the psychical investigations that are being carried on. Over a hundred such men have been given first-hand evidence, and in 1923 thirty, including eighteen medical men of distinction, signed and permitted the publication of a statement of their full belief in the genuineness of the manifestations they saw under conditions of rigid control.

Dr. Geley at one time held a series of sittings with Eva, summoning a hundred men of science to witness one or other of them. So strict were his tests that he winds up his account with the words: "I will not merely say that there is no fraud. I will say that there has not been the possibility of fraud." Again he walked the old path and found the same results, save that the phantasms in his experiments took the form of female faces, sometimes beautiful and, as he assured the author, unknown to him. They may be thought-forms from Eva, for in none of his recorded results did he get the absolute living spirit. There was enough, however, to cause Dr. Geley to say: "What we have seen kills materialism. There is no longer any room for it in the world." By this he means, of course, the old-fashioned materialism of Victorian days, by which thought was a result of matter. All the new evidence points to matter being the result of thought. It is only when you ask

THE EXPERIMENT AT THE INSTITUT MÉTAPSYCHIQUE, PARIS

When Richet, Geley and De Gramont obtained the wax moulds of hands which have confirmed the earlier experiments of Oxley and others This is, of course, an idealized non-evidential impression of the scene

"Whose thought?" that you get upon debatable ground.

Subsequent to his experiments with Eva, Dr. Geley got even more wonderful results with Franek Kluski, a Polish gentleman, with whom the ectoplasmic figures were so solid that he was able to take a mould of their hands in paraffin. These paraffin gloves, which are exhibited in London,* are so small at the wrist-opening that the hand could not possibly have been withdrawn without breaking the brittle mould. It could only have been done by dematerialization—no other way is possible. These experiments were conducted by Geley, Richet, and Count de Gramont, three most competent men. A fuller discussion of these and other moulds taken from ectoplasmic figures will be found in Chapter XX. They are very important, as being the most permanent and undeniable proofs of such structures that have ever been advanced. No rational criticism of them has ever yet been made.

Another Polish medium, named Jean Guzik, has been tested at the Paris Institute by Dr. Geley. The manifestations consisted of lights and ectoplasmic hands and faces. Under conditions of the severest control, thirty-four distinguished persons in Paris, most of whom were entirely sceptical, affirmed, after long and minute investigation, their belief in the genuineness of the phenomena observed with this medium. Among them were members of the French

* Similar gloves are to be seen at the Psychic College, 59 Holland Park, W., or at the Psychic Museum, Abbey House, Victoria Street, Westminster.

Academy, of the Academy of Sciences, of the Academy of Medicine, doctors of medicine and of law, and police experts.

Ectoplasm is a most protean substance, and can manifest itself in many ways and with varying properties. This was demonstrated by Dr. W. J. Crawford, Extra-Mural Lecturer in Mechanical Engineering at Queen's University, Belfast. He conducted an important series of experiments from 1914 to 1920 with the medium Miss Kathleen Goligher. He has furnished an account of them in three books, "The Reality of Psychic Phenomena" (1917), "Experiments in Psychical Science" (1919), and "The Psychic Structures at the Goligher Circle" (1921). Dr. Crawford died in 1920, but he left an imperishable memorial in those three books of original experimental research which have probably done as much to place psychic science on an assured footing as any other works on the subject.

To understand fully the conclusions he arrived at his books must be read, but here we may say briefly that he demonstrated that levitations of the table, raps on the floor of the room, and movements of objects in the séance room were due to the action of "psychic rods," or, as he came to call them in his last book, "psychic structures," emanating from the medium's body. When the table is levitated these "rods" are operated in two ways. If the table is a light one, the rod or structure does not touch the floor, but is "a cantilever firmly fixed to the medium's body at one end, and gripping the under surface or legs of the

table with the free or working end." In the case of a heavy table the reaction, instead of being thrown on the medium, is applied to the floor of the room, forming a kind of strut between the under surface of the levitated table and the floor. The medium was placed in a weighing scale, and when the table was levitated an increase in her weight was observed.

Dr. Crawford supplies this interesting hypothesis of the process at work in the formation of ectoplasm at a circle. It is to be understood that by "operators" he means the spirit operators controlling the phenomena :

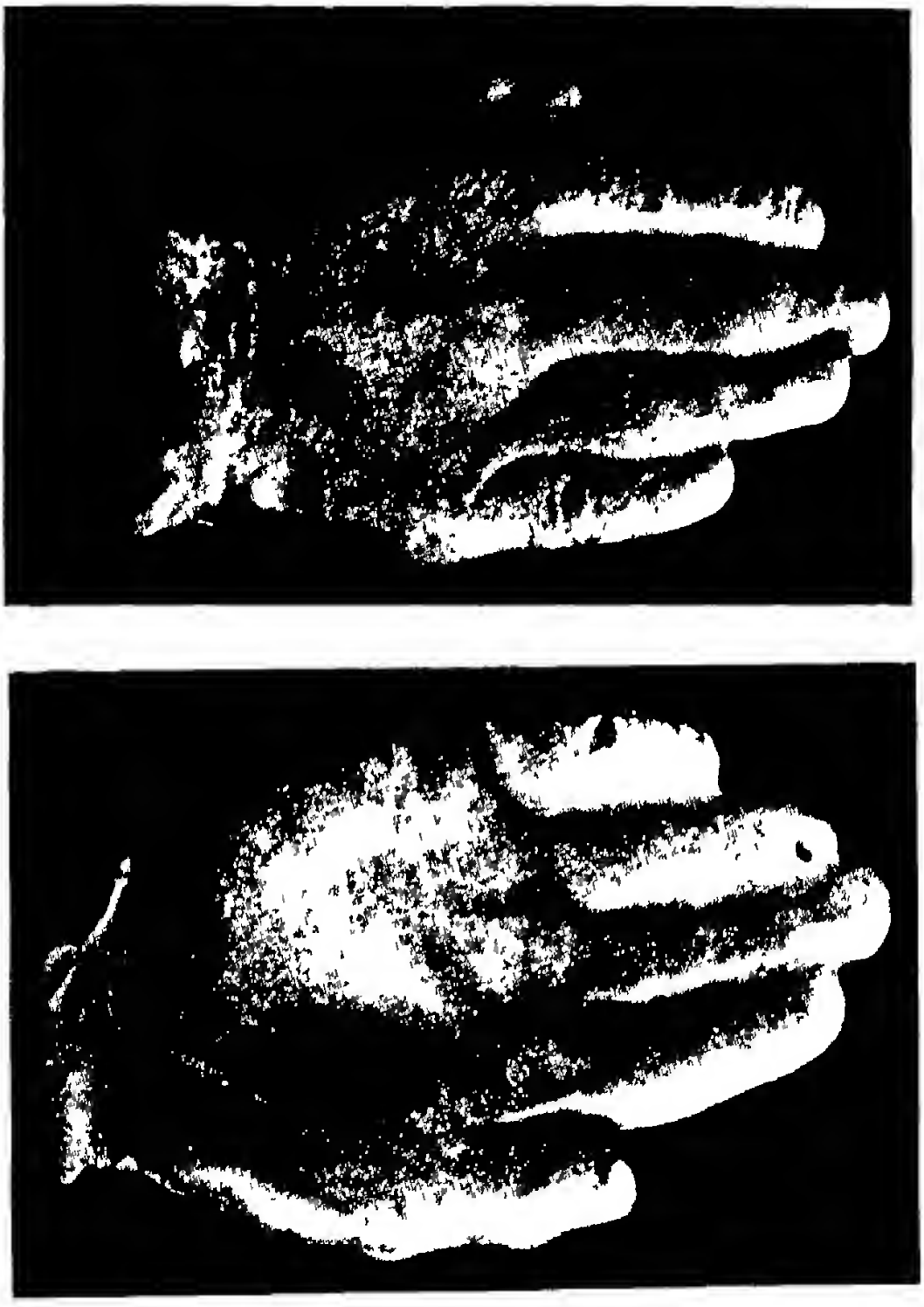
Operators are acting on the brains of the sitters and thence on their nervous systems. Small particles, it may even be molecules, are driven off the nervous system, out through the bodies of sitters at wrists, hands, fingers, or elsewhere. These small particles, now free, have a considerable amount of latent energy inherent in them, an energy which can react on any human nervous system with which they come into contact. This stream of energized particles flows round the circle, probably partly on the periphery of their bodies. The stream, by gradual augmentation from the sitters, reaches the medium at high degree of "tension," energizes her, receives increment from her, traverses the circle again, and so on. Finally, when the "tension" is sufficiently great, the circulating process ceases, and the energized particles collect on or are attached to the nervous system of the medium, who has henceforth a reservoir from which to draw. The operators having now a good supply of the right kind of energy at their disposal, viz. nerve energy, can act upon the body of the medium, who is so constituted that gross matter from

her body can, by means of the nervous tension applied to it, be actually temporarily detached from its usual position and projected into the séance room.*

This is probably the first attempt at a clear explanation of what occurs at a séance for physical phenomena, and it is possible that it describes with fair accuracy what really takes place. In the following extract Dr. Crawford makes an important comparison between the earlier and later psychic manifestations, and also enunciates a bold comprehensive theory for all psychic phenomena:

I have compared the whitish, cloud-like appearance of the matter in the structure with photographs of materialization phenomena in all stages obtained with many different mediums all over the world, and the conclusion I have come to is that this material very closely resembles, if it is not identical with, the material used in all such materialization phenomena. In fact, it is not too much to say that this whitish, translucent, nebulous matter is the basis of all psychic phenomena of the physical order. Without it in some degree no physical phenomena are possible. It is what gives consistence to the structures of all kinds erected by the operators in the séance chamber; it is, when properly manipulated and applied, that which enables the structures to come into contact with the ordinary forms of matter with which we are acquainted, whether such structures are ones similar to those with which I am particularly dealing, or whether they are materializations of bodily forms like hands or faces. Further, to me it appears likely that this matter will be found eventually to be the basis of the structures apparently erected for the manifestation of that peculiar form of phenomena known as the

* "The Reality of Psychic Phenomena," p. 243.



PLASTER CAST OF ECTOPLASMIC HAND

Obtained by Dr. Geley and impossible of reproduction in any other fashion

(Note the breadth of wrist as compared with hand)

Direct Voice, while the phenomena known as Spirit Photography appear also to have it as a basis.*

Whilst Crawford was working at his ectoplasmic rods at Belfast, Dr. Geley was checking the results obtained from Eva C. by a fresh series of experiments. He thus summarizes his observations on the phenomena which he observed:

A substance emanates from the body of the medium, it externalizes itself, and is amorphous or polymorphous in the first instance. This substance takes various forms, but in general it shows more or less composite organs. We may distinguish : (1) the substance as a substratum of materialization; (2) its organized development. Its appearance is generally announced by the presence of fluid, white and luminous flakes of a size ranging from that of a pea to that of a five-franc piece, and distributed here and there over the medium's black dress, principally on the left side. . . . The substance itself emanates from the whole body of the medium, but especially from the natural orifices and the extremities, from the top of the head, from the breasts, and the tips of the fingers. The most usual origin, which is most easily observed, is that from the mouth. . . . The substance occurs in various forms, sometimes as ductile dough, sometimes as a true protoplastic mass, sometimes in the form of numerous thin threads, sometimes as cords of various thicknesses, or in the form of narrow rigid rays, or as a broad band, as a membrane, as a fabric, or as a woven material, with indefinite and irregular outlines. The most curious appearance is presented by a widely expanded membrane, provided with fringes and rucks, and resembling in appearance a net.

The amount of externalized matter varies within wide limits. In some cases it completely envelops the medium

* "The Psychic Structures at the Goligher Circle," p. 19.

as in a mantle. It may have three different colours—white, black, or grey. The white colour is the most frequent, perhaps, because it is the most easily observed. Sometimes the three colours appear simultaneously. The visibility of the substance varies a great deal, and it may slowly increase or decrease in succession. To the touch it gives various impressions. Sometimes it is moist and cold, sometimes viscous and sticky, more rarely dry and hard. . . . The substance is mobile. Sometimes it moves slowly up or down across the medium, on her shoulders, on her breast, or on her knees, with a creeping motion resembling a reptile. Sometimes the movements are sudden and quick. The substance appears and disappears like lightning and is extraordinarily sensitive. . . . The substance is sensitive to light.

We have been able to give only a part of Dr. Geley's masterly analysis and description. This final passage deals with an important aspect:

During the whole time of the materialization phenomenon the product formed is in obvious physiological and psychical connexion with the medium. The physiological connexion is sometimes perceptible in the form of a thin cord joining the structure with the medium, which might be compared with the umbilical cord joining the embryo to its parent. Even if this cord is not visible, the physiological *rapport* is always close. Every impression received through the ectoplasm reacts upon the medium and vice versa. The sensation reflex of the structure coalesces with that of the medium ; in a word, everything proves that the ectoplasm is the partly externalized medium herself.

If the details of this account are compared with those given earlier in this chapter, it will be seen at

once how numerous are the points of resemblance. Ectoplasm in its fundamentals has ever been the same. After these confirmations it is not scepticism but pure ignorance which denies the existence of this strange material.

Eva C. came to London, as already stated, and held thirty-eight séances under the auspices of the Society for Psychical Research, but the report* is a very conflicting and unsatisfactory document. Dr. Schrenck Notzing was able to get yet another medium from whom he was able to demonstrate ectoplasm, the results roughly corresponding with those obtained in Paris. This was a lad of fourteen, Willie S. In the case of Willie S., Dr. Schrenck Notzing showed this new substance to a hundred picked observers, not one of whom was able to deny the evidence of his own senses. Among those who signed an affirmative statement were professors or ex-professors of Jena, Giessen, Heidelberg, Munich, Tübingen, Upsala, Freiburg, Basle, and other universities, together with a number of famous physicians, neurologists, and savants of every sort.

We can say, then, that there is no doubt of its existence. It cannot, however, be produced to order. It is a delicate operation which may fail. Thus several experimenters, notably a small committee of the Sorbonne, did fail. We have learned that it needs the right men and the right conditions, which conditions are mental and spiritual, rather than chemical. A harmonious atmosphere will help, while a carping,

* S.P.R. *Proceedings*, Vol. XXXII, pp. 209-343

antagonistic one will hinder or totally prevent its appearance. In this it shows its spiritual affinities and that it differs from a purely physical product.

What is it? It takes shape. Who determines the shape? Is it the mind of the entranced medium? Is it the mind of the observers? Is it some independent mind? Among the experimenters we have a material school who urge that we are finding some extraordinary latent property of the normal body, and we have another school, to which the author belongs, who believe that we have come upon a link which may be part of a chain leading to some new order of life. It should be added that there is nothing concerning it which has not been known to the old alchemists of the Middle Ages. This very interesting fact was brought to light by Mr. Foster Damon, of Harvard University, who gave a series of extracts from the works of Vaughan, a philosopher who lived about 1650, where under the name of the "First matter" or of "Mercury" a substance is described, drawn from the body, which has all the characteristics of ectoplasm. Those were the days when, between the Catholic Church on one side and the witch-finders of the Puritans on the other, the ways of the psychic researcher were hard. That is why the chemists of that day disguised their knowledge under fantastic names, and why that knowledge in consequence died out. When one realizes that by the Sun they meant the operator, by the Moon the subject, by the Fire the mesmeric force, and by Mercury the resulting ectoplasm, one has the key to some of their secrets.

The author has frequently seen ectoplasm in its vaporous, but only once in its solid, form.* That was at a sitting with Eva C. under the charge of Madame Bisson. Upon that occasion this strange variable substance appeared as a streak of material six inches long, not unlike a section of the umbilical cord, embedded in the cloth of the dress in the region of the lower stomach. It was visible in good light, and the author was permitted to squeeze it between his fingers, when it gave the impression of a living substance, thrilling and shrinking under his touch. There was no possibility of deception upon this occasion.

It is impossible to contemplate the facts known about ectoplasm without seeing their bearing upon psychic photography. The pictures photographed round Eva, with their hazy woolly fringe, are often exactly like the photographs obtained by Mr. Hope and others. The most rational opinion seems to be that ectoplasm once formed can be moulded by the mind, and that this mind may, in the simpler cases, simply be the mind of the unconscious medium. We forget sometimes that we are ourselves spirits, and that a spirit in the body has presumably similar powers to a spirit out of the body. In the more complex cases, and especially in psychic photography, it is abundantly clear that it is not the spirit of the medium which is at work, and that some more powerful and purposeful force has intervened.

Personally, the author is of opinion that several

* Save in the many instances when he has seen actual materialized faces or figures.

different forms of plasm with different activities will be discovered, the whole forming a separate science of the future which may well be called Plasmology. He believes also that all psychic phenomena external to the medium, including clairvoyance, may be traced to this source. Thus a clairvoyant medium may well be one who emits this or some analogous substance which builds up round him or her a special atmosphere that enables the spirit to manifest to those who have the power of perception. As the aerolite passing into the atmosphere of the earth is for a moment visible between two eternities of invisibility, so it may be that the spirit passing into the psychic atmosphere of the ectoplasmic medium can for a short time indicate its presence. Such speculations are beyond our present proofs, but Tyndall has shown how such exploratory hypotheses may become the spear-heads of truth. The reason why some people see a ghost and some do not may be that some furnish sufficient ectoplasm for a manifestation, and some do not, while the cold chill, the trembling, the subsequent faint, may be due not merely to terror but partly to the sudden drain upon the psychic supplies.

Apart from such speculations, the solid knowledge of ectoplasm, which we have now acquired, gives us at last a firm material basis for psychic research. When spirit descends into matter it needs such a material basis, or it is unable to impress our material senses. As late as 1891 Stainton Moses, foremost psychic of his day, was forced to say, "I know no more about the method or methods by which materialized forms

are produced than I did when I first saw them." Were he living now he could hardly say the same.

This new precise knowledge has been useful in giving us some rational explanation of those rapping sounds which were among the first phenomena to attract attention. It would be premature to say that they can only be produced in one way, but it may at least be stated that the usual method of their production is by the extension of a rod of ectoplasm, which may or may not be visible, and by its percussion on some solid object. It is probable that these rods may be the conveyers of strength rather than strong in themselves, as a small copper wire may carry the electric discharge which will disintegrate a battleship. In one of Crawford's admirable experiments, finding that the rods were coming from the chest of his medium, he soaked her blouse with liquid carmine, and then asked for raps upon the opposite wall. The wall was found to be studded with spots of red, the ectoplasmic protrusion having carried with it in each case some of the stain through which it passed. In the same way table-tilting, when genuine, would appear to be due to an accumulation of ectoplasm upon the surface, collected from the various sitters and afterwards used by the presiding intelligence. Crawford surmised that the extrusions must often possess suckers or claws at the end, so as to grip or to raise, and the author subsequently collected several photographs of these formations which show clearly a serrated edge at the end that would fulfil such a purpose.

Crawford paid great attention also to the correspondence between the weight of the ectoplasm emitted and the loss of weight in the medium. His experiments seemed to show that everyone is a medium, that everyone loses weight at a materializing séance, and that the chief medium only differs from the others in that she is so constituted that she can put out a larger ectoplasmic flow. If we ask why one human being should differ from another in this respect, we reach that barren controversy why one should have a fine ear for music and another be lost to all melody. We must take these personal attributes as we find them. In Crawford's experiments it was usual for the medium to lose as much as 10 or 15 lb. in a single sitting—the weight being restored to her immediately the ectoplasm was retracted. On one occasion the enormous loss of 52 lb. was recorded. One would have thought that the scales were false upon this occasion were it not that even greater losses have been registered in the case of other mediums, as has already been recorded in the account of the experiments of Olcott with the Eddys.

There are some other properties of ectoplasmic protrusions which should be noted. Not only is light destructive to them unless they are gradually acclimatized or specially prepared beforehand by the controls, but the effect of a sudden flash is to drive the structure back into the medium with the force of a snapped elastic band. This is by no means a false claim in order to protect the medium from

surprise, but it is a very real fact which has been verified by many observers. Any tampering with ectoplasm, unless its fraudulent production is a certainty, is to be deprecated, and the forcible dragging at the trumpet, or at any other object which is supported by the ectoplasmic rod, is nearly as dangerous as the exhibition of a light. The author has in mind one case where an ignorant sitter removed the trumpet, which was floating in front of him, from the circle. It was done silently, but none the less the medium complained of pain and sickness to those around her and was prostrated for some days. Another medium exhibited a bruise from the breast to the shoulder which was caused by the recoil of the band when some would-be exposer flashed an electric torch. When the ectoplasm flies back to a mucoid surface the result may be severe hæmorrhage, several instances of which have come within the author's personal notice. In one case, that of Susanna Harris, in Melbourne, the medium was confined to bed for a week after such an experience.

It is vain in a single chapter of a work which covers a large subject to give any detailed view of a section of that subject which might well have a volume to itself. Our knowledge of this strange, elusive, protean, all-pervading substance is likely to increase from year to year, and it may be prophesied that if the last generation has been occupied with protoplasm, the next will be engrossed with its psychic equivalent, which will, it is to be hoped, retain Charles Richet's name of ectoplasm, though various other words such as "plasm,"

"teleplasm," and "ideoplasm" are unfortunately already in circulation.

Since this chapter was prepared fresh demonstrations of ectoplasm have occurred in various parts of the world, the most noticeable being with "Margery," or Mrs. Crandon, of Boston, whose powers have been fully treated in Mr. Malcolm Bird's volume of that name.

CHAPTER XIX

SPIRIT PHOTOGRAPHY

THE first authentic account of the production of what is called a spirit photograph dates from 1861. This result was obtained by William H. Mumler in Boston, U.S.A. In England in 1851 Richard Boursnell is said to have had a similar experience, but no early photograph of this nature has been preserved. The first example in England capable of being verified occurred with the photographer Hudson, in 1872.

Like the rise of modern Spiritualism, this new development was predicted from the Other Side. In 1856 Mr. Thomas Slater, an optician, residing at 136 Euston Road, London, was holding a séance with Lord Brougham and Mr. Robert Owen, when it was rapped out that the time would come when Mr. Slater would take spirit photographs. Mr. Owen remarked that if he were in the spirit world when that time came he would appear on the plate. In 1872, when Mr. Slater was experimenting in spirit photography, he is said to have obtained on a plate the face of Mr. Robert Owen and also that of Lord Brougham.* Alfred Russel Wallace was shown these results by Mr. Slater, and said :†

* *The Spiritualist*, Nov. 1, 1873.

† "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism," 1901, p. 198.

The first of his successes contained two heads by the side of a portrait of his sister. One of these heads is unmistakably the late Lord Brougham's ; the other, much less distinct, is recognized by Mr. Slater as that of Robert Owen, whom he knew intimately up to the time of his death.

After describing other spirit photographs obtained by Mr. Slater, Dr. Wallace goes on:

Now whether these figures are correctly identified or not, is not the essential point. The fact that *any* figures, so clear and unmistakably human in appearance as these, should appear on plates taken in his own private studio by an experienced optician and amateur photographer, who makes all his apparatus himself, and with no one present but the members of his own family, is the real marvel. In one case a second figure appeared on a plate with himself, taken by Mr. Slater when he was absolutely alone, by the simple process of occupying the sitter's chair after uncapping the camera. . . .

Mr. Slater himself showed me all these pictures, and explained the conditions under which they were produced. That they are not impostures is certain, and as the first independent confirmations of what had been previously obtained only through professional photographers, their value is inestimable.

From Mumler in 1861 to William Hope in our own day there have appeared some twenty to thirty recognized mediums for psychic photography, and between them they have produced thousands of those supernormal results which have come to be known as "extras." The best known of these sensitives, in addition to Hope and Mrs. Deane, are Hudson, Parkes, Wyllie, Buguet, Boursnell and Duguid.

Mumler, who was employed as an engraver by a leading firm of jewellers in Boston, was not a Spiritualist, nor a professional photographer. In an idle hour, while trying to take a photograph of himself in a friend's studio, he obtained on the plate the outline of another figure. The method he adopted was to focus an empty chair, and after uncovering the lens, spring into position by the chair and stand until the requisite exposure was made. Upon the back of the photograph Mr. Mumler had written:

> This photograph was taken of myself, by myself, on Sunday, when there was not a living soul in the room beside me—so to speak. The form on my right I recognize as my cousin, who passed away about twelve years since.
>
> W. H. MUMLER.

The form is that of a young girl who appears to be sitting in the chair. The chair is distinctly seen through the body and arms, also the table upon which one arm rests. Below the waist, says a contemporary account, the form (which is apparently clothed in a dress with low neck and short sleeves) fades away into a dim mist, which simply clouds over the lower part of the picture. It is interesting to note features in this first spirit photograph which have been repeated many times in those obtained by later operators.

News of what had happened to Mumler quickly became known, and he was besieged with applications for sittings. He at first refused, but at last had to yield, and when further "extras" were obtained and his

fame spread, he was compelled finally to give up his business and to devote himself to this new work. As his experiences have been, in the main, those of every psychic photographer who has succeeded him, we may glance briefly at them.

Private sitters of good repute obtained thoroughly evidential and recognizable pictures of friends and relatives, and were perfectly satisfied that the results were genuine. Then came professional photographers who were certain that there must be some trick, and that if they were given the opportunity of testing under their own conditions they would discover how it was done. They came one after another, in some cases with their own plates, camera, and chemicals, but after directing and supervising all the operations, were unable to discover any trickery. Mumler also went to their photographic studios and allowed them to do all the handling and developing of the plates, with the same result. Andrew Jackson Davis, who was at that time the editor and publisher of the *Herald of Progress* in New York, sent a professional photographer, Mr. William Guay, to make a thorough investigation. He reported that after he had been allowed to control the whole of the photographic process, there appeared on the plate a spirit picture. He experimented with this medium on several other occasions, and was convinced of his genuineness.

Another photographer, Mr. Horace Weston, was sent to investigate by Mr. Black, the famous portrait photographer of Boston. When he returned, after

having duly obtained a spirit picture, he said he could detect nothing in the operations that differed from those employed in taking an ordinary photograph. Then Black went himself and personally performed all the manipulation of plates and development. As he watched one of the plates developing and saw appearing on it another form besides his own, and finally found it to be that of a man leaning his arm on his shoulder, he exclaimed in his excitement, " My God, is it possible ? "

Mumler had more applications for sittings than he could find time for, and appointments were made for weeks ahead. These came from all classes—ministers, doctors, lawyers, judges, mayors, professors, and business men being mentioned as among those particularly interested. A full account of the various evidential results obtained by Mumler will be found in contemporary records.*

In 1863 Mumler, like so many other photographic mediums since his day, found on his plates " extras " of living persons. His strongest supporters were unable to accept this new and startling phenomenon, and while holding to their former belief in his powers, were convinced that he had resorted to trickery. Dr. Gardner, in a letter to the *Banner of Light* (Boston, February 20, 1863), referring to this fresh development, writes :

While I am fully of the belief that genuine spirit likenesses have been produced through his mediumship, evidence of deception in two cases, at least, has been

* *The Spiritual Magazine*, 1862, p. 562 ; 1863, pp. 34–41.

furnished me, which is perfectly conclusive. . . . Mr. Mumler, or some person connected with Mrs. Stuart's rooms, has been guilty of deception in palming off as genuine spirit likenesses pictures of a person who is now living in this city.

What made the case even more conclusive to the accusers was the fact that the same "extra" of the living person appeared on two different plates. This "exposure" set the tide of public opinion against him, and in 1868 Mumler departed for New York. Here his business prospered for a time until he was arrested by order of the mayor of New York, at the instance of a newspaper reporter who had received an unrecognized "extra." After a lengthy trial he was discharged without a stain on his character. The evidence of professional photographers who were not Spiritualists was strongly in Mumler's favour.

Mr. Jeremiah Gurney testified:

I have been a photographer for twenty-eight years; I have witnessed Mumler's process, and although I went prepared to scrutinize everything, I could find nothing which savoured of fraud or trickery . . . the only thing out of the usual routine being the fact that the operator kept his hand on the camera.

Mumler, who died in poverty in 1884, has left an interesting and convincing narrative of his career in his book, "Personal Experiences of William H. Mumler in Spirit Photography,"* a copy of which is to be seen at the British Museum.

Hudson, who obtained the first spirit photograph

* Boston, 1875.

in England of which we have objective evidence, is said to have been about sixty years of age at that time (March, 1872). The sitter was Miss Georgiana Houghton, who has fully described the incident.* There is abundant testimony to Hudson's work. Mr. Thomas Slater, already quoted, took his own camera and plates, and after minute observation reported that "collusion or trickery was altogether out of the question." Mr. William Howitt, a stranger to the medium, went unannounced and received a recognized "extra" of his two deceased boys. He pronounced the photographs to be "perfect and unmistakable."

Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace secured a good picture of his mother. Describing his visit he says:†

I sat three times, always choosing my own position. Each time a second figure appeared in the negative with me. The first was a male figure with a short sword, the second a full-length figure, standing apparently a few feet on one side and rather behind me, looking down at me and holding a bunch of flowers. At the third sitting, after placing myself, and after the prepared plate was in the camera, I asked that the figure would come close to me. The third plate exhibited a female figure standing *close* in front of me, so that the drapery covers the lower part of my body. I saw all the plates developed, and in each case the additional figure started out the moment the developing fluid was poured on, while my portrait did not become visible till, perhaps, twenty seconds later. I recognized none of these figures in the negatives; but the moment I got the proofs, the first glance showed me that

* "Chronicles of the Photographs of Spiritual Beings," &c., 1882, p. 2.

† "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism" (Revised Edition 1901), pp. 196–7.

the third plate contained an unmistakable portrait of my mother—like her both in features and expression; not such a likeness as a portrait taken during life, but a somewhat pensive, idealized likeness—*yet still, to me, an unmistakable likeness.*

The second portrait, though indistinct, was also recognized by Dr. Wallace as a picture of his mother. The first "extra" of a man was unrecognized.

Mr. J. Traill Taylor, who was then editor of the *British Journal of Photography*, testified * that he secured supernormal results with this medium, using his own plates, "and that at no time during the preparation, exposure, or development of the pictures was Mr. Hudson within ten feet of the camera or dark room." Surely this must be accepted as final.

Mr. F. M. Parkes, living at Grove Road, Bow, in the East End of London, was a natural psychic who had veridical visions from his childhood. He knew nothing of Spiritualism until it was brought to his notice in 1871, and early in the following year he experimented in photography with his friend Mr. Reeves, the proprietor of a dining-room near King's Cross. He was then in his thirty-ninth year. At first only irregular markings and patches of light appeared on the plates, but after three months a recognized spirit extra was obtained, the sitters being Dr. Sexton and Dr. Clarke, of Edinburgh. Dr. Sexton invited Mr. Bowman, of Glasgow, an experienced photographer, to make a thorough examination of the camera, the dark room and all the appliances in use.

* *British Journal of Photography*, August, 1873.

This he did, and declared imposition on the part of Parkes to be impossible. For some years this medium took no remuneration for his services. Mr. Stainton Moses, who has devoted a chapter to Mr. Parkes,* writes :

> On turning over Mr. Parkes's album, the most striking point is the enormous variety of the designs ; the next, perhaps, the utterly unlike character of most of them, and their total dissimilarity to the conventional ghost. Out of 110 that lie before me now, commencing from April 1872, and with some intermissions extending down to present date, there are not two that are alike—scarcely two that bear any similarity to each other. Each design is peculiar to itself, and bears upon the face of it marks of individuality.

He states that a considerable number of the photographs were recognized by the sitters.

M. Ed. Buguet, the French spirit photographer, visited London in June, 1874, and at his studio at 33 Baker Street had many well-known sitters. Mr. Harrison, editor of *The Spiritualist*, speaks of a test employed by this photographer, namely, cutting off a corner of the glass plate and fitting it to the negative after development. Mr. Stainton Moses describes Buguet as a tall, thin man, with earnest face and clearly-cut features, with an abundance of bushy black hair. During the exposure of a plate he was said to be in partial trance. The psychic results he obtained were of far higher artistic quality and distinctness than those obtained by other mediums. Also a big percentage of the spirit forms were recognized.

* *Human Nature*, 1875, p. 152.

A curious feature with Buguet was that he obtained a number of portraits of the "double" of sitters, as well as of those living, but not present, with him in the studio. Thus Stainton Moses, while lying in a state of trance in London, had his picture appear on a plate in Paris when Mr. Gledstanes was the sitter.*

In April, 1875, Buguet was arrested and charged by the French Government with producing fraudulent spirit photographs. To save himself he confessed that all his results had been obtained by trickery. He was sentenced to a fine of five hundred francs and imprisonment for one year. At the trial a number of well-known public men maintained their belief in the genuineness of the "extras" they had obtained, in spite of the production of dummy "ghosts" said to have been used by Buguet. The truth of spirit photography does not rest with this medium, but those who are interested enough to read the full account of his arrest and trial† should be able to form their own conclusions. Writing after the trial, Mr. Stainton Moses says: "I not only believe—I *know*, as surely as I know anything, that some of Buguet's pictures were genuine."

Coates says, however, that Buguet was a worthless fellow. Certainly the position of a man who can only prove that he is not a rogue by admitting that he made a false confession out of fear is a weak one. The case for psychic photography would be stronger without him. As to his confession, it was extracted from

* *Human Nature*, Vol. IX, p. 97.

† *The Spiritualist*, Vols. VI, VII (1875), and *Human Nature*, Vol. IX, p 334.

him by a criminal action which the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Toulouse took against the *Revue Spirite*, when Leymarie, the editor, was tried and condemned. Buguet was told that his one chance was to confess. Thus pressed, he did what so many victims of the Inquisition had done before him, and made a forced confession, which did not save him, however, from twelve months' imprisonment.

Richard Boursnell (1832–1909) occupied a prominent position in the middle period of the history of spirit photography. He was in partnership with a professional photographer in Fleet Street, and is said to have had psychic markings, with occasional hands and faces, on his plates as early as 1851. His partner accused him of not cleaning the plates properly (those were the days of the wet collodion process), and after an angry dispute Boursnell said he would have nothing more to do with that side of the business. It was nearly forty years later before he again got markings, and then extra forms, with his photographs, much to his annoyance, because it meant injury to his business and the destruction of many plates. With great difficulty Mr. W. T. Stead persuaded him to allow him to have sittings. Under his own conditions, Mr. Stead obtained repeatedly what the old photographer called "shadow pictures." At first they were not recognized, but later on several that were thoroughly identified were obtained. Mr. Stead gives particulars of precautions observed in marking plates, etc., but says that he attaches little importance to these, considering that the appearance on the plate of a recognized like-

ness of an unknown relative of an unknown sitter a test far superior to precautions which any expert conjurer or trick photographer might evade. He says:

> Again and again I sent friends to Mr. Boursnell giving him no information as to who they were, nor telling him anything as to the identity of the person's deceased friend or relative whose portrait they wished to secure, and time and again when the negative was developed, the portrait would appear in the background, or sometimes in front of the sitter. This occurred so frequently that I am quite convinced of the impossibility of any fraud. One time it was a French editor, who, finding the portrait of his deceased wife appear on the negative when developed, was so transported with delight that he insisted on kissing the photographer, Mr. B., much to the old man's embarrassment. On another occasion it was a Lancashire engineer, himself a photographer, who took marked plates and all possible precautions. He obtained portraits of two of his relatives and another of an eminent personage with whom he had been in close relations. Or again, it was a near neighbour who, going as a total stranger to the studio, obtained the portrait of her deceased daughter.

In 1903 the Spiritualists of London presented this medium with a purse of gold and a testimonial signed by over a hundred representative Spiritualists. On this occasion the walls of the rooms of the Psychological Society in George Street, Portman Square, were hung with three hundred chosen spirit photographs taken by Boursnell.

With regard to Mr. Stead's point about the "recognized likeness," critics declare that the sitter often imagines the likeness, and that at times two sitters

have claimed the same "extra" as a relative. In answer to this it may be said that Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, for instance, ought to be the best judge whether the picture was a likeness of his dead mother. Dr. Cushman (of whom we shall speak later) submitted the "extra" of his daughter Agnes to a number of his friends and relations, and all were convinced of the likeness. But irrespective of any certainty about the likeness, there is overwhelming evidence that these supernormal portraits really do occur, and in thousands of cases they have been recognized.

Mr. Edward Wyllie (born 1848, died 1911) had genuine mediumistic gifts which were tested by a number of qualified investigators. He was born in Calcutta, his father, Colonel Robert Wyllie, having been military secretary to the Government of India. Wyllie, who served as a captain in the Maori war in New Zealand, afterwards took up photography there. He went to California in 1886. After a time spots of light began to show on his negatives, and as they increased threatened to destroy his business. He had never heard of spirit photography until a lady sitter suggested this as a possible explanation. Experimenting with her, faces appeared on the plate in the spots of light. Thenceforth these faces came so often with other sitters that he was compelled to give up his usual business and devote himself to spirit photography. But here he encountered fresh trouble. He was accused of obtaining his results by fraud, and this so wounded him that he tried to earn his living in some other way, but he did not succeed, and had to come

to account." After a minute account of the precautions taken, the report concludes:

> As a committee we have no theory, and testify only to "that which we do know." Individually we differ as to probable causes, but unanimously agree concerning the palpable facts. . . . We will give twenty-five dollars to any Los Angeles photographer who by trick or skill will produce similar results under similar conditions.
>
> (Signed)—Julian McCrae, P. C. Campbell, J. W. Mackie, W. N. Slocum, John Henley.

David Duguid (1832–1907), the well-known medium for automatic writing and painting, had the benefit of careful investigation of his spirit photographs by Mr. J. Traill Taylor, editor of the *British Journal of Photography*, who in the course of a paper read by him before the London and Provincial Photographic Association on March 9, 1893, gave an account of recent test sittings with this medium. He says:

> My conditions were exceedingly simple. . . . They were, that I for the nonce would assume them all to be tricksters, and to guard against fraud, should use my own camera and unopened packages of dry plates purchased from dealers of repute, and that I should be excused from allowing a plate to go out of my own hand till after development, unless I felt otherwise disposed; but that, as I was to treat them as under suspicion, so they must treat me, and that every act I performed must be in the presence of two witnesses, nay, that I would set a watch upon my own camera in the guise of a duplicate one of the same focus —in other words, I would use a binocular stereoscopic camera and dictate all the conditions of operation.

After giving details of the procedure adopted, he records the appearance on the plates of extra figures, and continues:

> Some were in focus, others not so ; some were lighted from the right, while the sitter was so from the left . . . some monopolized the major portion of the plate, quite obliterating the material sitters ; others were as if an atrociously badly vignetted portrait, or one cut oval out of a photograph by a can-opener, or equally badly clipped out, were held up behind the sitter. But here is the point : not one of these figures which came out so strongly in the negative was visible in any form or shape to me during the time of exposure in the camera, and I vouch in the strongest manner for the fact that no one whatever had an opportunity of tampering with any plate anterior to its being placed in the dark slide or immediately preceding development. Pictorially they are vile, but how came they there ?

Other well-known sitters have described remarkable evidential results obtained with Duguid.*

Mr. Stainton Moses, in the concluding chapter of his valuable series on Spirit Photography,† discusses the theory that the extra forms photographed are moulded from ectoplasm (he speaks of it as the " fluidic substance ") by the invisible operators, and makes important comparisons between the results obtained by different photographic mediums.

Mr. John Beattie's " valuable and conclusive experiments," as Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace calls them, can only be referred to briefly. Mr. Beattie, of Clif-

* James Coates, " Photographing the Invisible " (1921), and Andrew Glendinning, " The Veil Lifted " (1894).

† *Human Nature*, Vols. VIII and IX, 1874-5.

ton, Bristol, who was a retired photographer of twenty years' standing, felt very doubtful about the genuineness of many of the alleged spirit photographs which had been shown to him, and determined to investigate for himself. Without any professional medium, but in the presence of an intimate friend who was a trance sensitive, he and his friend Dr. G. S. Thomson, of Edinburgh, conducted a series of experiments in 1872 and obtained on the plates first patches of light and, later on, entire extra figures. They found that the extra forms and markings showed up on the plate during development much in advance of the sitter—a peculiarity often observed by other operators. Mr. Beattie's thorough honesty is vouched for by the editor of the *British Journal of Photography*. Mr. Stainton Moses* and others supply details of the above experiments.

The London *Daily Mail* in 1908 appointed a Commission to make "an inquiry into the genuineness or otherwise of what are called spirit photographs," but it came to naught. It was composed of three non-Spiritualists, Messrs. R. Child Bayley, F. J. Mortimer, and E. Sanger-Shepherd, and three supporters of spirit photography, Messrs. A. P. Sinnett, E. R. Serocold Skeels, and Robert King. In the course of the report of the latter three they state that they

> can only agree to report that the Commission has failed to secure proof that spirit photography is possible, not because evidence to that effect is otherwise than very abundant, but by reason of the unfortunate and unpractical

* *Human Nature*, Vol. VIII (1874), p 390 *et seq*

attitude adopted by those members of the commission who had no previous experience of the subject.

Particulars of the Commission will be found in *Light*.* In recent years the history of spirit photography has largely centred round what is known as the Crewe Circle, which is now composed of Mr. William Hope and Mrs. Buxton, both living at Crewe. The Circle was formed about 1905, but did not attract attention until it was discovered by Archdeacon Colley in 1908. Mr. Hope, describing his first experiences, says that while working in a factory near Manchester, he took a photograph one Saturday afternoon of a fellow-workman whom he posed in front of a brick wall. When the plate was developed there was to be seen, in addition to the photograph of his friend, the form of a woman standing by his side, with the brick wall showing through her. The man asked Hope how he had put the other figure there, saying that he recognized it as that of his sister who had been dead some years. Mr. Hope says:

> I knew nothing at all about Spiritualism then. We took the photograph to the works on Monday, and a Spiritualist there said it was what was called a Spirit photograph. He suggested that we should try again on the following Saturday at the same place with the same camera, which we did, and not only the same lady came on the plate again, but a little child with her. I thought this very strange, and it made me more interested, and I went on with my experiments.

For a long time Hope destroyed all the negatives on which he obtained spirit pictures, until Archdeacon

* 1908, p. 526, and 1909, pp. 290, 307, 329.

Colley became acquainted with him and told him he must preserve them.

Archdeacon Colley had his first sitting with the Crewe Circle on March 16, 1908. He brought his own camera (a Lancaster ¼-plate which Mr. Hope still uses), his own diamond-marked plates and dark slides, and developed plates with his own chemicals. All that Mr. Hope did was to press the bulb for the exposure. On one of the plates were two spirit pictures.

Since that early day, Mr. Hope and Mrs. Buxton have taken thousands of spirit photographs under every imaginable test, and they are proud to be able to say that they have never charged a penny as professional fees, only charging for the actual photographic materials used and for their time.

Mr. M. J. Vearncombe, a professional photographer in Bridgwater, Somerset, had the same disturbing experience as Wyllie, Boursnell, and others in finding unaccountable patches of light appear on his plates, and, like them, he came to take spirit photographs. In 1920 Mr. Fred Barlow, of Birmingham, a well-known investigator, obtained with this medium extras of faces and written messages, under test conditions, on plates that were not exposed in the camera.* Since that date Mr. Vearncombe has secured many evidential results.

Mrs. Deane's mediumship is of recent date (her first spirit photograph was in June, 1920). She has

* See *Light* 1920, p. 190.

obtained many recognized "extras" under test conditions, and her work is sometimes equal to the best of her predecessors in this branch. Recently she has achieved two very fine results. Dr. Allerton Cushman, a well-known American scientist and Director of the National Laboratories at Washington, paid an unexpected visit to the British College of Psychic Science at Holland Park in July, 1921, and obtained through Mrs. Deane a beautiful and well-recognized "extra" of his deceased daughter. Full details of this sitting will be found recorded, with photographs, in the *Journal* of the American Society for Psychical Research.* The other result was on November 11, 1922, on the occasion of the Great Silence, on Armistice Day, in Whitehall, when in a photograph of the immense concourse of people gathered in the vicinity of the Cenotaph many spirit faces are discernible, and a number of them were recognized. This was repeated on three successive years.

Modern researches have proved that these psychic results are not obtained, in some instances at least, through the lens of the camera. On many occasions, under test conditions, these supernormal pictures have been secured from an unopened box of plates, held between the hands of the sitter or sitters. Also, when the experiment has been tried of using two cameras, if any "extra" appears, it is found in one camera, not in both. A theory held is that the image is precipitated on the photographic plate, or that a psychic screen is applied to the plate.

* March 1922, pp. 132–147.

The author may perhaps say a few words upon his own personal experience, which has been chiefly with the Crewe Circle and with Mrs. Deane. In the case of the latter there have always been results, but in no case were the "extras" recognized. The author is well aware of Mrs. Deane's psychic power, which has been conspicuously shown during the long series of experiments held by Mr. Warrick under every possible test condition, and fully reported in *Psychic Science*.* His own experiences have, however, never been evidential, and if he relied only upon them he could not speak with any certainty. He used Mrs. Deane's own plates, and he has a strong feeling that the faces may be precipitated upon them during the days of preparation when she carries the packet upon her person. She is under the impression that she can facilitate her results in this way, but she is probably quite mistaken, for the Cushman case was extempore. It is also on record that a trick was once played upon her at the Psychic College, her own packet being taken away and another substituted. In spite of this "extras" were obtained. She would be well advised, therefore, if she abandoned methods which make her results, however genuine, so vulnerable to attack.†

It is otherwise with Mr. Hope. On the various occasions when the author has sat with him he has always brought his own plates, has marked them in the dark room, and has handled and developed them him-

* July, 1925.

† Since writing the above, the author has tested the medium with his own plates, marked and developed by himself. He obtained six psychic results in eight experiments.

self. In nearly every case an "extra" has been obtained, that "extra"—though there has never yet been a clear recognition—has certainly been abnormal in its production. Mr. Hope has endured the usual attacks from ignorance or malice to which every medium is exposed, but he has emerged from them with his honour unblemished.

Some mention should be made of the remarkable results of Mr. Staveley Bulford, a talented psychic student, who has produced most excellent genuine psychic photographs. No one can look over his scrap-book and note the gradual development of his gift from mere blotches of light to very perfect faces without being convinced of the reality of the process.

The subject is still obscure, and all the author's personal experience goes to support the view that in a certain number of cases nothing external is ever built up, but the effect is produced by a sort of ray carrying a picture upon it which can penetrate solids, such as the wall of the dark slide, and imprint its effect upon the plate. The experiment, already cited, where two cameras have been trained simultaneously, with the medium midway between them, appears to be conclusive, since it showed a result on one plate and not on the other. The author has obtained results on plates which never left the dark slide, quite as vivid as any which have been exposed to light. It is probable that if Hope never took the cap off the lens his results would often be the same.

Whatever the eventual explanation, the only hypothesis which at present covers the facts is that of a wise

invisible Intelligence, presiding over the operation and working in his own fashion, which shows different results with different circles. So standardized are the methods of each that the author would undertake to tell at a glance which photographer had taken any print submitted to him. Supposing such an Intelligence to have the powers claimed, we can then at once see why every normal photographic law is violated, why shadows and lights no longer agree, and why, in short, a whole series of traps are laid for the ordinary conventional critic. We can understand also, since the picture is simply built up by the Intelligence and shot on to the plate, why we find results which are reproductions of old pictures and photographs, and why it is as possible that the face of a living man may appear on the plate as that of a disembodied spirit. In one instance, quoted by Dr. Henslow, the reproduction of a rare Greek script from the British Museum appeared in one of the plates from Hope, with a slight change in the Greek which showed that it was not a copy.* Here apparently the Intelligence had noted the inscription, had shot it on to the plate, but had made some small slip of memory in the conveyance. This explanation has the disconcerting corollary that the mere fact that we get the psychic photograph of a dead friend is no proof at all that the friend is really present. It is only when that fact is independently asserted in some séance, before or after, that we get something in the nature of proof.

In his experiments with Hope the author has

* "Proofs of the Truths of Spiritualism," p. 218. Henslow.

seemed to catch a glimpse of the process by which the objective photographs are built up—so much so that he has been able to arrange a series of slides which exhibit the various stages. The first of these slides—taken with Mr. William Jeffrey, of Glasgow, as a sitter—shows a sort of cocoon of thinly veined, filmy material which we must call ectoplasm, since the various plasms have not yet been subdivided. It is as tenuous as a great soap bubble and has nothing within: This would appear to be the containing envelope within which the process is carried on, force being collected there as in an earthly medium's cabinet. In the next slide one sees that a face has formed inside the cocoon, and that the cocoon is opening down the centre. Various stages of this opening are seen. Finally, the face looks out with the cocoon festooned back, and forming an arch over the face, and a hanging veil on either side of it. This veil is highly characteristic of Hope's pictures, and when it is wanting one may argue that there was no objective presence and that the effect is really a psychograph. The veil or mantilla effect in various forms may be traced back through the whole series of previous photographs, and is especially noticeable in one taken by an amateur on the West Coast of Africa, where the dark spirit has thick folds over the head and down to the ground. When similar results are obtained at Crewe and at Lagos, it is only common sense to agree that a common law is at work.

In pointing out the evidence for the psychic cocoon, the author hopes that he has made some

Mr. F. W. H. Myers * would have us believe that the Daemon of Socrates was "a profounder stratum of the sage himself," which was communicating with "the superficial or conscious stratum." And in the same way he would explain the voices which came to Joan. But in saying this he is not explaining anything.

What are we to think of the reports that ancient statues spoke? The learned, anonymous author, said to have been Dr. Leonard Marsh, of Vermont University, of that curious book "Apocatastasis; or Progress Backwards," quotes Nonnus as saying:

> Concerning this statue [of Apollo], where it stood, and how it spoke, I have said nothing. It is to be understood, however, that there was a statue at Delphi which emitted an inarticulate voice. For you must know that spirits speak with inarticulate voices because they have no organs by which they can speak articulately.

Dr. Marsh comments on this:

> The author seems not to have been well informed in regard to the speaking power of the spirits, since all ancient history declares that their voice was often heard in the air, speaking articulately, and repeating the same words in different places; and this was called, and universally known, by the name of "Vox Divina."

He goes on to say that with the statue mentioned the spirit was evidently experimenting with the perverse material of which it was made (probably stone) to see if he could make it articulate, but could not succeed because the statue had "no larynx or other organs of voice, as modern mediums have." Dr. Marsh in his book set out to show that the Spiritual-

* S.P.R. *Journal*, Vol. III (1887), p. 131.

istic phenomena at that time (1854) were crude and immature in comparison with ancient spirit intercourse. The ancients, he says, spoke of it as a science, and asserted that the knowledge obtained by it was certain and reliable, "in spite of all fraudulent daemons." Granting that the priest was a voice medium, the speaking oracle is easily explained.

It is worth noting that the Voice, which was one of the first forms of mediumship associated with modern Spiritualism, is still prominent, whereas many other aspects of earlier mediumship have become rare. As there are a number of competent investigators who consider that voice phenomena are among the most convincing of psychic manifestations, let us glance at the records.

Jonathan Koons, the Ohio farmer, appears to have been the first of the modern mediums with whom it appeared. In the log-hut already mentioned, called his "Spirit Room," he had in 1852, and for some years after, a number of surprising phenomena, included among which were spirit voices speaking through a tin megaphone or "trumpet." Mr. Charles Partridge, a well-known public man, who was an early investigator, thus describes hearing the spirit known as John King speak at a séance at the Koons's in 1855 :

> At the close of the séance the spirit of King, as is his custom, took up the trumpet and gave a short lecture through it—*speaking audibly and distinctly*, presenting the benefits to be derived both in time and eternity from intercourse with spirits, and exhorting us to be discreet and bold in speech, diligent in our investigations, faithful

to the responsibilities which those privileges impose, charitable towards those who are in ignorance or error, tempering our zeal with wisdom, etc.

Professor Mapes, the well-known American chemist, said that in the presence of the Davenports he conversed for half an hour with John King, whose voice was loud and distinct. Mr. Robert Cooper, one of the biographers of the Davenport Brothers, often heard King's voice in daylight, and in the moonlight when walking in the street with the Davenports.

At the present day we have come to have some idea of the process through which the voices are produced at a séance. This knowledge, by the way, has been corroborated by communications received from the spirits themselves.

It appears that ectoplasm coming chiefly from the medium, but also in a lesser degree from the sitters, is used by the spirit operators to fashion something resembling a human larynx. This they use in the production of the voice.

In the explanation given to Koons by the spirits they spoke of using a combination of the elements of the spiritual body, and what corresponds to our modern ectoplasm, "a physical aura which emanates from the medium." Compare this with the spirit explanation given through Mrs. Bassett, a well-known English voice medium in the 'seventies: "They say they take the emanations from the medium and other members of the circle, wherewith they make speaking apparatus which they use to talk with." *

* *The Spiritual Magazine*, 1872, p 45

Mrs. Mary Marshall (died 1875), who was the first English public medium, was the channel for voices coming from John King and others. In London in 1869 Mr. W. H. Harrison, editor of *The Spiritualist*, conducted exhaustive tests with her. As the early Spiritualists were supposed to be people who were easily imposed upon, it is interesting to note his careful scrutiny. He says,* speaking of Mrs. Mary Marshall :

Tables and chairs moved about in daylight, and sometimes rose from the ground, whilst at the dark séances voices were heard, and luminous manifestations seen ; all these things purported to come from spirits. I therefore resolved to be a constant visitor at the séances and to stick at the work till I either discovered the assertions to be true, or detected the imposture with sufficient accuracy and certainty to expose it in the presence of witnesses, and to be able to publish the facts with complete sectional drawings of the apparatus used.

The voice calling itself " John King " is backed by an intelligence apparently entirely different in kind from that of Mr. or Mrs. Marshall. However, I privately assumed that Mr. Marshall did the voice, and by attending a few séances found that it was a common thing for Mr. Marshall and John King to speak at the same time, so I was obliged to throw over that theory.

Next I assumed that Mrs. Marshall did it, till one evening I sat next her ; she was on my right-hand side, I had hold of her hand and arm, and John King came and talked into my left ear, Mrs. Marshall being perfectly motionless all the time, so over went the other theory.

Next, I assumed that a confederate among the visitors

* *The Spiritualist*, Vol. I, p. 38

to the circle did John King's voice, so had a séance with Mr. and Mrs. Marshall alone ; John was there, and talked for an hour.

Lastly, I assumed that a concealed confederate did the voice, so attended two séances where Mrs. Marshall was present among strangers to her, in a strange house, and again John King was as lively as ever.

Finally, on Thursday evening December 30th, 1869, John King came and talked to eleven persons at Mrs. C. Berry's circle, in the absence of Mr. and Mrs. Marshall, the medium being Mrs. Perrin.

While Mr. Harrison satisfied himself in this way that no human being present produced the voices, he does not mention—what was the case—that the voices often gave internal proofs of identity such as neither the medium nor a confederate could have supplied.

Signor Damiani, a well-known investigator, in his evidence before the London Dialectical Society, declared * that voices that had spoken to him in the presence of unpaid mediums had subsequently conversed with him at private séances with Mrs. Marshall, and had " there exhibited the same peculiarities as to tone, expression, pitch, volume, and pronunciation, as upon the former occasions." These voices also talked with him on matters of so private a nature that no one else could have known of them. At times, too, they foretold events which duly came to pass.

It is natural that those who come in contact for the first time with voice phenomena should suspect ventriloquism as a possible explanation. D. D. Home, with whom these voices occurred often, was careful to meet

* Report of the London Dialectical Society (1871) p. 201.

this objection. General Boldero, describing the séance when Home visited him at Cupar, Fife, in 1870, writes: *

Then voices were heard speaking together in the room, two different persons judging from the intonation. We could not make out the words spoken, as Home persisted in speaking to us all the time. We remonstrated with him for speaking, and he replied, "I spoke purposely that you might be convinced the voices were not due to any ventriloquism on my part, as this is impossible when anyone is speaking in his natural voice." Home's voice was quite unlike that of the voices heard in the air.

The author can corroborate this from his personal experience, having repeatedly heard voices speaking at the same time. Examples are given in the chapter on Some Great Modern Mediums.

Admiral Usborne Moore testifies to hearing three and four spirit voices simultaneously with Mrs. Wriedt, of Detroit. In his book "The Voices" (1913) he quotes the testimony of a well-known writer, Miss Edith K. Harper, formerly private secretary to Mr. W. T. Stead. She writes: †

After considering a record of about two hundred sittings with Mrs. Etta Wriedt during her three visits to England, of which the notes of the general circles alone would fill a huge volume, were they written *in extenso*, I will try to relate, in brief, a few of the most striking experiences my mother and I were privileged to have through Mrs. Wriedt's mediumship. Looking over my notes of her first visit in 1911 the following details stand out as among the principal features of the séances:—

* S.P.R. *Journal*, Vol. IV, p. 127.
† "The Voices," pp. 324–325.

(1) Mrs Wriedt was never entranced, but conversed freely with the sitters, and we have heard her talking to, even arguing with, some spirit person with whose opinions she did not agree. I remember once Mr. Stead shaking with laughter on hearing Mrs. Wriedt suddenly reprimand the late editor of the *Progressive Thinker* for his attitude towards mediums, and the evident confusion of Mr. Francis, who, after an attempted explanation, dropped the trumpet, and apparently retired discomforted.

(2) Two, three, and even four spirit voices talking simultaneously to different sitters.

(3) Messages given in foreign languages—French, German, Italian, Spanish, Norwegian, Dutch, Arabic and others—with which the medium was quite unacquainted. A Norwegian lady, well known in the world of literature and politics, was addressed in Norwegian by a man's voice, claiming to be her brother, and giving the name P———. She conversed with him, and seemed overcome with joy at the correct proofs he gave her of his identity. . . . Another time a voice spoke in voluble Spanish, addressing itself definitely to a lady in the circle whom none of the sitters knew to be acquainted with that language ; the lady thereupon entered into a fluent conversation in Spanish with the Spirit, to the evident satisfaction of the latter.

Mrs. Mary Hollis (afterwards Mrs. Hollis-Billing) was a remarkable American medium who visited England in 1874 and again in 1880, when a presentation and address were given her in London by representative Spiritualists. A fine account of her varied mediumship is given by Dr. N. B. Wolfe in his book, "Startling Facts in Modern Spiritualism." Mrs. Hollis was a lady of refinement, and thousands obtained evidence and consolation through her powers.

Her two spirit guides, "James Nolan" and an Indian named "Ski," talked freely in the Direct Voice. At one of her séances, held at Mrs. Makdougall Gregory's house in Grosvenor Square on January 21, 1880, a clergyman of the Church of England* "had the thread of a conversation taken up by a spirit where it had been broken off seven years before, and he professed himself perfectly satisfied with the genuineness of the voice, which was very peculiar and distinctly audible to those sitting on either side of the clergyman who was addressed."

Mr. Edward C. Randall gives an account of another good American voice medium, Mrs. Emily S. French, in his book "The Dead Have Never Died." She died in her home in Rochester, New York, on June 24, 1912. Mr. Randall investigated her powers for twenty years, and was convinced that her mediumship was of a very high character.

Mrs. Mercia M. Swain, who died in 1900, was a voice medium through whose instrumentality a Rescue Circle in California was able to reach and do good to unprogressed souls in the beyond. An account of these extraordinary sittings, which were under the control of Mr. Leander Fisher, of Buffalo, New York, and lasted for twenty-five years, from 1875 to 1900, will be found in Admiral Usborne Moore's book, "Glimpses of the Next State."

Mrs. Everitt, a very fine non-professional medium, obtained voices in England in 1867 and for many years after.

* *Spiritual Notes*, Vol. I, p. 262, iv.

Most of the great physical mediums, especially the materializing mediums, produced voice phenomena. They occurred, for instance, with Eglinton, Spriggs, Husk, Duguid, Herne, Mrs. Guppy, and Florence Cook.

Mrs. Elizabeth Blake, of Ohio, who died in 1920, was one of the most wonderful voice mediums of whom we have any record, and perhaps the most evidential, because in her presence the voices were regularly produced in broad daylight. She was a poor, illiterate woman living in the tiny village of Bradrick on the shore of the Ohio River, on the opposite bank of which was the town of Huntingdon, in West Virginia. She had been a medium since childhood. She was strongly religious and belonged to the Methodist Church, from which, however, like some others, she was expelled on account of her mediumship.

Little has been written about her, the only detailed account being a valuable monograph by Professor Hyslop.* She is said to have been repeatedly tested by "scientists, physicians and others," and to have submitted willingly to all their tests. As, however, these men were unable to detect any fraud, they did not trouble to give their results to the world. Hyslop had his attention drawn to her by hearing that a well-known American conjurer, of many years' experience, had become convinced of her genuineness, and in 1906 he travelled to Ohio to investigate her mediumship.

Hyslop's voluminous report describes evidential communications that occurred.

* *Proceedings* American S P R, Vol VII (1913), pp. 570–788.

He makes this not unusual confession of ignorance of ectoplasmic processes in the production of voice phenomena. He says :

> The loudness of the sounds in some cases excludes the supposition that the voices are conveyed from the vocal cords to the trumpet. I have heard the sounds twenty feet away, and could have heard them forty or fifty feet away, and Mrs. Blake's lips did not move.
>
> It still remains to get any clear hypothesis to explain this aspect of the phenomena. Even to say "spirits" would not satisfy the ordinary scientific man. He wants to know the mechanical processes involved, as we explain ordinary speech.
>
> It may be true that spirits are the first cause in the case, but there are steps in the process which intervene between their initiative and the ultimate result. It is that which creates the perplexity more than the supposition that spirits are in some way back of it all . . . the scientific man cannot see how spirits can institute a mechanical event without the use of a mechanical instrument.

Nor can anyone else, for that matter, but the explanation has been given again and again from the Other Side. Professor Hyslop's want of knowledge of the link existing between the sounds and their source would be less surprising were it not for the fact that the spirits themselves have repeatedly supplied the answer to the questions he raises. Through many mediums they have given almost identical explanations.

Dr. L. V. Guthrie, superintendent of the West Virginia Asylum at Huntingdon, Mrs. Blake's medical adviser, was convinced of her powers. He wrote:*

* Op. cit., p 581.

I have had sittings with her in my own office, also on the front porch in the open air, and on one occasion in a carriage as we were driving along the road. She has repeatedly offered to let me have a sitting and use a lamp chimney instead of a tin horn, and I have frequently seen her produce the voices with her hand resting on one end of the horn.

Dr. Guthrie gives the following two cases with Mrs. Blake where the information supplied was not known to the sitters, and could not have been known to the medium.

One of my employees, a young lady, whose brother had joined the army and gone to the Philippines, was anxious to receive some word from him, and had written letters to him repeatedly and addressed them in care of his Company in the Philippines, but could receive no answer. She called on Mrs. Blake and was told by the "spirit" of her mother, who had passed away some several years, that if she would address a letter to this brother at C—— she would get an answer. She did so and received a reply from him in two or three days, as he had returned from the Philippines, unknown to any of his family.

The next case is even more striking.

An acquaintance of mine, of prominent family in this end of the State, whose grandfather had been found at the foot of a high bridge with his skull smashed and life extinct, called on Mrs. Blake a few years ago and was not thinking of her grandfather at the time. She was very much surprised to have the "spirit" of her grandfather tell her that he had not fallen off the bridge while intoxicated, as had been presumed at the time, but that he had been murdered by two men who met him in a buggy and had proceeded to sandbag him, relieve him of his valuables,

and throw him over the bridge. The "spirit" then proceeded to describe minutely the appearance of the two men who had murdered him, and gave such other information that led to the arrest and conviction of one or both of these individuals.

Numerous sitters with Mrs. Blake noted that while the medium was speaking, spirit voices were heard at the same time, and further, that the same spirits preserved the same personality and the same intonation of voice through a course of years. Hyslop gives details of a case with this medium where the voice communication gave the correct solution for opening a combination lock to a safe, when it was unknown to the sitter.

Among modern voice mediums in England are Mrs. Roberts Johnson, Mrs. Blanche Cooper, John C. Sloan, William Phœnix, the Misses Dunsmore, Evan Powell the Welsh medium, and Mr. Potter.

Mr. H. Dennis Bradley has given a full account of the voice mediumship of George Valiantine, the well-known American medium. Mr. Bradley was able himself to secure voices in his own Home Circle, without any professional medium. It is impossible to exaggerate the services which Mr. Bradley's devoted and self-sacrificing work has rendered to psychic science. If our whole knowledge depended upon the evidence given in these two books, it would be ample for any reasonable man.*

Some few pages may also be devoted to a summary

* "Towards the Stars," and "The Wisdom of the Gods"

of the very cogent objective evidence which is offered by the casts that have been taken from the bodies of ectoplasmic figures—in other words, of materialized forms. The first who explored this line of research seems to have been William Denton, the author of "Nature's Secrets," a book on psychometry, published in 1863. In Boston (U.S.A.) in 1875, working with the medium Mary M. Hardy, he employed methods which closely resemble those used by Richet and Geley in their more recent experiments in Paris. Denton actually gave a public demonstration in Paine Hall, when the cast of a spirit face was said to have been produced in melted paraffin. Other mediums with whom these casts were obtained were Mrs. Firman, Dr. Monck, Miss Fairlamb (afterwards Mrs. Mellon), and William Eglinton. The fact that these results were corroborated by the later Paris sittings is a strong argument for their validity. Mr. William Oxley, of Manchester, describes how on February 5, 1876, a beautiful mould of a lady's hand was obtained, and how a subsequent mould of the hand of Mrs. Firman the medium was found to be quite different. On this occasion Mrs. Firman was confined in a lace net bag which went over her head and was fastened round the waist, enclosing her hands and arms. This would seem to be final as regards any fraud on the part of the medium, while it is also recorded that the wax mould was warm, which shows that it could not have been brought into the séance room. It is hard to see what further precautions could have been taken to guarantee the result. On a second occasion a

mould of the foot as well as of the hand was obtained, the openings of the wrist and ankle being in each case so narrow that the limb could not have been withdrawn. There seems to have been no explanation open save that the hand or foot had dematerialized.

Dr. Monck's results seem also to stand the test of criticism. Oxley experimented with him in Manchester in 1876, and had the same success as with Mrs. Firman. On this occasion different moulds from two separate figures were obtained. Oxley says of these experiences, "The importance and value of these spirit moulds cannot be overestimated, for while the relation of spiritual phenomena to others of doubtful and sceptical turn is valuable only on the ground of credibility, the casts of these hands and feet are permanent and patent facts, and now demand from men of science, artists, and scoffers a solution of the mystery of their production." This demand is still made. A famous conjurer, Houdini, and a great anatomist, Sir Arthur Keith, have both tried their hands, and the results, laboriously produced, have only served to accentuate the unique character of that which they tried to copy.

In the case of Eglinton it has been recorded by Dr. Nichols, the biographer of the Davenports, that evidential casts of hands were obtained, and that one lady present recognized a peculiarity—a slight deformity—characteristic of the hand of her little daughter who had been drowned in South Africa at the age of five years.

Perhaps the most final and convincing of all the moulds was that which was obtained by Epes Sergeant from the medium Mrs. Hardy, already mentioned in connexion with Denton's experiments. The conclusions are worth quoting in full. The writer says—

"Our conclusions are :

"1. That the mould of a full-sized perfect hand was produced in a closed box by some unknown power exercising intelligence and manual activity.

"2. That the conditions of the experiment were independent of all reliance on the character and good faith of the medium, though the genuineness of her mediumship has been fully vindicated by the result.

"3. That these conditions were so simple and so stringent as completely to exclude all opportunities for fraud and all contrivances for illusion, so that our realization of the conclusiveness of the test is perfect.

"4. That the fact, long known to investigators, that evanescent, materialized hands, guided by intelligence and projected from an invisible organism, can be made visible and tangible, receives confirmation from this duplicated test.

"5. That the experiment of the mould, coupled with that of the so-called spirit photograph, gives objective proof of the operation of an intelligent force outside of any visible organism, and offers a fair basis for scientific investigation.

"6. That the inquiry 'How was that mould produced within that box?' leads to considerations that must have a most important bearing on the philosophy of the future, as well as on problems of psychology

and physiology, and opens new views of the latent powers and high destiny of man."

Seven reputable witnesses sign the report.

If the reader is not satisfied by such various examples of the validity of these tests by casts and moulds, he should read the conclusions which were reached by that great investigator Geley, at the end of his classical experiments with Kluski, already shortly alluded to.

Dr. Geley carried out with Kluski a number of remarkable experiments in the formation of wax moulds of materialized hands. He has recorded* the results of a series of eleven successful sittings for this purpose. In a dim light the medium's right hand was held by Professor Richet and his left hand by Count Potocki. A trough containing wax, kept at melting-point by warm water, was placed two feet in front of Kluski, and for the purpose of a test the wax was impregnated (unknown to the medium) with the chemical cholesterin, this to prevent the possibility of substitution. Dr. Geley writes:

> The feeble light did not admit of the phenomena being actually seen; we were aware of the moment of dipping, by the sound of splashing in the liquid. The operation involved two or three immersions. The hand that was acting was plunged in the trough, was withdrawn, and, covered with warm paraffin, touched the hands of the controllers of the experiments, and then was plunged again into the wax. After the operation the glove of paraffin, still warm but solidified, was placed against the hand of one of the controllers.

* *Revue Métapsychique*, June, 1921.

In this way nine moulds were taken: seven of hands, one of a foot, and one of a chin and lips. The wax of which they were composed on being tested gave the characteristic reaction of cholesterin. Dr. Geley shows twenty-three photographs of the moulds and of plaster casts made from them. It may be mentioned that the moulds exhibit the folds of the skin, the nails and the veins, and these markings in nowise resemble those of the medium. Efforts to make similar moulds from the hands of human beings were only partially successful, and the difference from those obtained at the sittings was obvious. Sculptors and moulders of repute have declared that they know of no method of producing wax moulds such as those obtained at the séances with Kluski.

Geley sums up the result thus: *

"We will now enumerate the proofs which we have given of the authenticity of the moulds of materialized limbs in our experiments in Paris and Warsaw.

"We have shown that quite apart from the control of the medium, whose two hands were held by us, all fraud was impossible.

"1. The theory of fraud by a rubber glove is inadmissible, for such an attempt gives crude and absurd results which can be seen at a glance to be imitations.

"2. It is not possible to produce such gloves of wax by using a rigid mould already prepared. A trial of this shows at once how impossible it is.

* "L'Ectoplasmie," etc., p. 278.

" 3. The use of a prepared mould in some fusible and soluble substance, covered with a film of paraffin during the séance and then dissolved out in a pail of water, will not fit in with the actual procedure. We had no pail of water.

" 4. The theory that a living hand was used (that of the medium or of an assistant) is inadmissible. This could not have been done, for several reasons, one being that gloves thus obtained are thick and solid, while ours are fine and delicate, also that the position of the fingers in our moulds makes it impossible that they could be withdrawn without breaking the glove. Also that the gloves have been compared with the hands of the medium and of the assistants, and that they are not alike. This is shown also by anthropological measurements.

" Finally, there is the hypothesis that the gloves were brought by the medium. This is disproved by the fact that we secretly introduced chemicals into the melted wax, and that these were found in the gloves.

" The report of the expert modellers on the point is categorical and final."

Nothing is evidence to those who are so filled with prejudice that they have no room for reason, but it is inconceivable that any normally endowed man could read all the above, and doubt the possibility of taking moulds from ectoplasmic figures.

CHAPTER XXI

FRENCH, GERMAN, AND ITALIAN SPIRITUALISM

SPIRITUALISM in France and the Latin races centres round Allan Kardec, who prefers for it the term Spiritism, and its predominant feature is a belief in reincarnation.

M. Hippolyte Leon Denizard Rivail, who adopted the pseudonym "Allan Kardec," was born in Lyons in 1804, where his father was a barrister. In 1850, when the American spirit manifestations were exciting attention in Europe, Allan Kardec investigated the subject through the mediumship of two daughters of a friend.

In the communications which were obtained he was informed that "Spirits of a much higher order than those who habitually communicated through the two young mediums, came expressly for him, and would continue to do so, in order to enable him to fulfil an important religious mission."

He tested this by drawing up a series of questions relating to the problems of human life, and submitting them to the supposed operating intelligences, and by means of raps and writing through the planchette he received the replies upon which he has founded his system of Spiritism.

After two years of these communications he found

that his ideas and convictions had become completely changed. He said:

"The instructions thus transmitted constitute an entirely new theory of human life, duty and destiny, that appears to me to be perfectly rational and coherent, admirably lucid and consoling, and intensely interesting." The idea came to him to publish what he had got, and on submitting this idea to the communicating intelligences, he was told that the teaching had been expressly intended to be given to the world, and that he had a mission confided to him by Providence. They also instructed him to call the work *Le Livre des Esprits* (The Spirits' Book).

The book thus produced in 1856 had a great success. Over twenty editions have been published, and the "Revised Edition," issued in 1857, has become the recognized text-book of spiritual philosophy in France. In 1861 he published "The Mediums' Book"; in 1864, "The Gospel as Explained by Spirits"; in 1865, "Heaven and Hell"; and in 1867, "Genesis." In addition to the above, which are his main works, he published two short treatises entitled, "What is Spiritism?" and "Spiritism Reduced to its Simplest Expression."

Miss Anna Blackwell, who has translated Allan Kardec's works into English, thus describes him:

In person, Allan Kardec was somewhat under middle height. Strongly built, with a large, round, massive head, well-marked features, and clear, grey eyes, he looked more like a German than a Frenchman. Energetic and persevering, but of a temperament that was calm, cautious,

and unimaginative almost to coldness, incredulous by nature and by education, a close, logical reasoner, and eminently practical in thought and deed; he was equally free from mysticism and from enthusiasm. . . . Grave, slow of speech, unassuming in manner, yet not without a certain quiet dignity resulting from the earnestness and single-mindedness which were the distinguishing traits of his character; neither courting nor avoiding discussion, but never volunteering any remark upon the subject to which he had devoted his life, he received with affability the innumerable visitors from every part of the world who came to converse with him in regard to the views of which he was the recognized exponent, answering questions and objections, explaining difficulties, and giving information to all serious inquirers, with whom he talked with freedom and animation, his face occasionally lighting up with a genial and pleasant smile, though such was his habitual sobriety of demeanour that he was never known to laugh. Among the thousands by whom he was thus visited were many of high rank in the social, literary, artistic, and scientific worlds. The Emperor Napoleon III, the fact of whose interest in spiritist phenomena was no mystery, sent for him several times, and held long conversations with him at the Tuileries upon the doctrines of "The Spirits' Book."

He founded the Society of Psychologic Studies, which met weekly at his house for the purpose of getting communications through writing mediums. He also established *La Revue Spirite*, a monthly journal still in existence, which he edited until his death in 1869. Shortly before this he drew up a plan of an organization to carry on his work. It was called "The Joint Stock Company for the Continuation of the Works of Allan Kardec," with power to buy and

sell, receive donations and bequests, and to continue the publication of *La Revue Spirite*. After his death his plans were faithfully carried out.

Kardec considered that the words "spiritual," "spiritualist," and "spiritualism" already had a definite meaning. Therefore he substituted "spiritism" and "spiritist."

This Spiritist philosophy is distinguished by its belief that our spiritual progression is effected through a series of incarnations.

Spirits having to pass through many incarnations, it follows that we have all had many existences, and that we shall have others, more or less perfect, either upon this earth or in other worlds.

The incarnation of spirits always takes place in the human race; it would be an error to suppose that the soul or spirit could be incarnated in the body of an animal.

A spirit's successive corporeal existences are always progressive, and never retrograde; but the rapidity of our progress depends on the efforts we make to arrive at perfection.

The qualities of the soul are those of the spirit incarnated in us; thus, a good man is the incarnation of a good spirit, and a bad man is that of an unpurified spirit.

The soul possessed its own individuality before its incarnation; it preserves that individuality after its separation from the body.

On its re-entrance into the spirit world, the soul again finds there all those whom it has known upon the earth, and all its former existences eventually come back to its memory, with the remembrance of all the good and of all the evil which it has done in them.

The incarnated spirit is under the influence of matter;

the man who surmounts this influence, through the elevation and purification of his soul, raises himself nearer to the superior spirits, among whom he will one day be classed. He who allows himself to be ruled by bad passions, and places all his delight in the satisfaction of his gross animal appetites, brings himself nearer to the impure spirits, by giving preponderance to his animal nature.

Incarnated spirits inhabit the different globes of the universe.*

Kardec conducted his investigations through the communicating intelligences by means of question and answer, and in this way obtained the material for his books. Much information was forthcoming on the subject of reincarnation. To the question: "What is the aim of the incarnation of spirits?" the answer was:

It is a necessity imposed on them by God, as the means of attaining perfection. For some of them it is an expiation; for others, a mission. In order to attain perfection, *it is necessary for them to undergo all the vicissitudes of corporeal existence.* It is the experience acquired by expiation that constitutes its usefulness. Incarnation has also another aim, viz. that of fitting the spirit to perform his share in the work of creation; for which purpose he is made to assume a corporeal apparatus in harmony with the material state of each world into which he is sent, and by means of which he is enabled to accomplish the special work, in connexion with that world, which has been appointed to him by the divine ordering. He is thus made to contribute his quota towards the general weal, while achieving his own advancement.

Spiritualists in England have come to no decision

* Introduction to "The Spirits' Book."

ALLAN KARDEC

with regard to reincarnation. Some believe in it, many do not, and the general attitude may be taken to be that, as the doctrine cannot be proved, it had better be omitted from the active politics of Spiritualism. Miss Anna Blackwell, in explanation of this attitude, suggests that the continental mind being more receptive of theories, has accepted Allan Kardec, while the English mind " usually declines to consider any theory until it has assured itself of the facts assumed by such theory."

Mr. Thomas Brevior (Shorter), one of the editors of *The Spiritual Magazine*, sums up the prevailing view of English Spiritualists of his day. He writes :*

> When Reincarnation assumes a more scientific aspect, when it can offer a body of demonstrable facts admitting of verification like those of Modern Spiritualism, it will merit ample and careful discussion. Meanwhile, let the architects of speculation amuse themselves if they will by building castles in the air; life is too short, and there is too much to do in this busy world to leave either leisure or inclination to occupy ourselves in demolishing these airy structures, or in showing on what slight foundations they are reared. It is far better to work out those points in which we are agreed than to wrangle over those upon which we appear so hopelessly to differ.

William Howitt, one of the stalwarts of early Spiritualism in England, is still more emphatic in his condemnation of reincarnation. After quoting Emma Hardinge Britten's remark that thousands in the Other World protest, through distinguished mediums,

* *The Spiritual Magazine*, 1876, p. 35.

that they have no knowledge or proofs of reincarnation, he says : *

The thing strikes at the root of all faith in the revelations of Spiritualism. If we are brought to doubt the spirits communicating under the most serious guise, under the most serious affirmations, where is Spiritualism itself? . . . If Reincarnation be true, pitiable and repellent as it is, there must have been millions of spirits who, on entering the other world, have sought in vain their kindred, children and friends. . . . Has even a whisper of such a woe ever reached us from the thousands and tens of thousands of communicating spirits? Never. We may, therefore, on this ground alone, pronounce the dogma of Reincarnation false as the hell from which it sprung.

Mr. Howitt, however, in his vehemence, forgets that there may be a time limit before the next incarnation takes place, and that also there may be a voluntary element in the act.

The Hon. Alexander Aksakof, in an interesting article† supplies the names of the mediums at Allan Kardec's circle, with an account of them. He also points out that a belief in the idea of reincarnation was strongly held in France at that time, as can be seen from M. Pezzani's work, "The Plurality of Existences," and others. Aksakof writes :

That the propagation of this doctrine by Kardec was a matter of strong predilection is clear; from the beginning Reincarnation has not been presented as an object of study, but as a dogma. To sustain it he has always had recourse to writing mediums, who, it is well known, pass so easily under the psychological influence of preconceived ideas;

* *The Spiritual Magazine*, 1876, p. 57.

† *The Spiritualist*, Vol. VII (1875), pp. 74–5.

and Spiritism has engendered such in profusion; whereas through physical mediums the communications are not only more objective, but always contrary to the doctrine of Reincarnation. Kardec adopted the plan of always disparaging this kind of mediumship, alleging as a pretext its moral inferiority. Thus the experimental method is altogether unknown in Spiritism; for twenty years it has not made the slightest intrinsic progress, and it has remained in total ignorance of Anglo-American Spiritualism! The few French physical mediums who developed their powers in spite of Kardec, were never mentioned by him in the "Revue"; they remained almost unknown to Spiritists, and only because their spirits did not support the doctrine of Reincarnation.

Aksakof adds that his remarks do not affect the question of reincarnation in the abstract, but only have to do with its propagation under the name of Spiritism.

D. D. Home, in commenting on Aksakof's article, has a thrust at a phase of the belief in reincarnation. He says :*

I meet many who are reincarnationists, and I have had the pleasure of meeting at least twelve who were Marie Antoinette, six or seven Mary Queen of Scots, a whole host of Louis and other kings, about twenty Alexander the Greats, but it remains for me yet to meet a plain John Smith, and I beg of you, if you meet one, to cage him as a curiosity.

Miss Anna Blackwell summarizes the contents of Kardec's chief books as follows :

"The Spirits' Book" demonstrates the existence and attributes of the Causal Power, and of the nature of the

* *The Spiritualist*, Vol. VII, p. 165.

relation between that Power and the universe, putting us in the track of the Divine operation.

"The Mediums' Book" describes the various methods of communication between this world and the next.

"Heaven and Hell" vindicates the justice of the Divine government, by explaining the nature of Evil as the result of ignorance, and showing the process by which men shall become enlightened and purified.

"The Gospel as Explained by Spirits" is a comment on the moral precepts of Christ, with an examination of His life and a comparison of its incidents with present manifestations of spirit power.

"Genesis" shows the accordance of the Spiritist philosophy with the discoveries of modern science, and with the general tenor of the Mosaic record, as explained by spirits.

"These works," she says, "are regarded by the majority of Continental Spiritualists as constituting the basis of the religious philosophy of the future—a philosophy in harmony with the advance of scientific discovery in the various other realms of human knowledge; promulgated by the host of enlightened Spirits acting under the direction of Christ Himself."

On the whole, it seems to the author that the balance of evidence shows that reincarnation is a fact, but not necessarily a universal one. As to the ignorance of our spirit friends upon the point, it concerns their own future, and if we are not clear as to our future, it is possible that they have the same limitations. When the question is asked, "Where were we before we were born?" we have a definite answer in the system of slow development by incarnation, with long intervals of spirit rest between, while otherwise

we have no answer, though we must admit that it is inconceivable that we have been born in time for eternity. Existence afterwards seems to postulate existence before. As to the natural question, "Why, then, do we not remember such existences?" we may point out that such remembrance would enormously complicate our present life, and that such existences may well form a cycle which is all clear to us when we have come to the end of it, when perhaps we may see a whole rosary of lives threaded upon the one personality. The convergence of so many lines of theosophic and Eastern thought upon this one conclusion, and the explanation which it affords in the supplementary doctrine of Karma of the apparent injustice of any single life, are arguments in its favour, and so perhaps are those vague recognitions and memories which are occasionally too definite to be easily explained as atavistic impressions. Certain hypnotic experiments, the most famous of which were by the French investigator, Colonel de Rochas, seemed to afford some definite evidence, the subject when in trance being pushed back for several alleged incarnations, but the farther ones were hard to trace, while the nearer came under the suspicion that they were influenced by the normal knowledge of the medium. It may, at least, be conceded that where some special task has to be completed, or where some fault has to be remedied, the possibility of reincarnation may be one which would be eagerly welcomed by the spirit concerned.

Before turning from the story of French Spiritual-

ism one cannot but remark upon the splendid group of writers who have adorned it. Apart from Allan Kardec, and the scientific work on research lines of Geley, Maxwell, Flammarion, and Richet, there have been pure Spiritists such as Gabriel Delanne, Henri Regnault, and Leon Denis who have made their mark. The last especially would have been deemed a great master of French prose, whatever might have been his theme.

This work, which confines itself to the main stream of psychic history, has hardly space in which it can follow its many meanderings in lesser rivulets over every land upon the globe. Such manifestations were invariably repetitions or close variants of those which have been already described, and it may briefly be stated that the cult is catholic in the fullest sense, for there is no land which is without it. From the Argentine to Iceland the same results have sprung in the same manner from the same causes. Such a history would require a volume in itself. Some special pages should, however, be devoted to Germany.

Though slow to follow the organized movement, for it was not until 1865 that *Psyche*, a Spiritualistic paper, was established in that country, it had above all other lands a tradition of mystic speculation and magical experiment, which might be regarded as a preparation for the definite revelation. Paracelsus, Cornelius Agrippa, van Helmont, and Jacob Boehme are all among the pioneers of the spirit, feeling their way out of matter, however vague the goal they may have

reached. Something more definite was attained by Mesmer, who did most of his work in Vienna in the latter part of the eighteenth century. However mistaken in some of his inferences, he was the prime mover in bringing the dissociation of soul and body before the actual senses of mankind, and a native of Strasbourg, M. de Puységur carried his work one step farther and opened up the wonders of clairvoyance. Jung Stilling and Dr. Justinus Kerner are names which must always be associated with the development of human knowledge along this mist-girt path. The actual announcement of spirit communication was received with mingled interest and scepticism, and it was long before any authoritative voices were raised in its defence. Finally, the matter was brought prominently forward when Slade made his historical visit in 1877. After viewing and testing his performances, he obtained at Leipzig the endorsement of six professors as to their genuine objective character. These were Zöllner, Fechner and Scheibner of Leipzig, Weber of Göttingen, Fichte of Stuttgart, and Ulrici of Halle. As these testimonials were reinforced by an affidavit from Bellachini, the chief conjurer of Germany, that there was no possibility of trickery, a considerable effect was produced upon the public mind, which was increased by the subsequent adhesion of two eminent Russians, Aksakof the statesman, and Professor Butlerof of St. Petersburg University. The cult does not appear, however, to have found a congenial soil in that bureaucratic and military land. Save for the name of Carl du Prel, one can recall none other

which is associated with the higher phases of the movement.

Baron Carl du Prel, of Munich, began his career as a student of mysticism, and in his first work * he deals not with Spiritualism but rather with the latent powers of man, the phenomena of dream, of trance, and of the hypnotic sleep. In another treatise, however, "A Problem for Conjurers," he gives a closely reasoned account of the steps which led him to a full belief in the truth of Spiritualism. In this book, while admitting that scientific men and philosophers may not be the best people to detect trickery, he reminds the reader that Bosco, Houdin, Bellachini, and other skilled conjurers have declared those mediums whom they have investigated to be free from imposture. Du Prel was not content, as so many are, to take second-hand evidence, but he had a number of sittings with Eglinton, and later with Eusapia Palladino. He gave particular attention to the phenomenon of psychography (slate writing) and he says of it:

One thing is clear, that is, that Psychography must be ascribed to a transcendental origin. We shall find (1) that the hypothesis of prepared slates is inadmissible. (2) The place on which the writing is found is quite inaccessible to the hands of the medium. In some cases the double slate is securely locked, leaving only room inside for the tiny morsel of slate pencil. (3) That the writing is actually done at the time. (4) That the medium is not writing. (5) The writing must be actually done with the morsel of slate, or lead pencil. (6) The writing is done by an intelligent being, since the answers are

* "Philosophy of Mysticism," 2 Vols. (1889). Trans. by C. C. Massey.

exactly pertinent to the questions. (7) This being can read, write, and understand the language of human beings, frequently such as is unknown to the medium. (8) It strongly resembles a human being, as well in the degree of its intelligence as in the mistakes sometimes made. These beings are, therefore, although invisible, of human nature or species. It is no use whatever to fight against this proposition. (9) If these beings speak, they do so in human language. If they are asked who they are, they answer that they are beings who have left this world. (10) Where these appearances become partly visible, perhaps only their hands, the hands seen are of human form. (11) When these things become entirely visible, they show the human form and countenance. . . . Spiritualism must be investigated by science. I should look upon myself as a coward if I did not openly express my convictions.

Du Prel emphasizes the fact that his convictions do not rest on results obtained with professional mediums. He states that he knows three private mediums "in whose presence direct writing not only takes place inside double slates, but is done in inaccessible places."

"In these circumstances," he says dryly, "the question 'Medium or Conjurer?' seems to me to stir up a great deal more dust than it deserves," a remark some psychical researchers might take to heart.

It is interesting to note that du Prel proclaims the assertion that the messages are only silly and trivial to be entirely unjustified by his experience, while at the same time he asserts that he has found no traces of superhuman intelligence, but of course, before

pronouncing upon such a point, one has to determine how a superhuman intelligence could be distinguished and how far it would be intelligible to our brains. Speaking of materialization, du Prel says :

When these things become entirely visible in the dark room, in which case the medium himself sits among the chain formed by the circle, they show the human form and countenance. It is very easily said that in this case it is the medium himself who is masquerading. But when the medium speaks from his seat; when his neighbours on either side declare that they have hold of his hands, and at the same time I see a figure standing close to me; when this figure illumines his face with the air-exhausted glass tube filled with quicksilver, lying on the table—the light produced by shaking which not impeding the phenomena—so that I can see it distinctly, then the collective evidence of the facts I have narrated proves to me the necessity of the existence of a transcendental being, even if thereby all the conclusions I have come to during twenty years of work and study should be thrown overboard. Since, however, on the contrary, my views (as set forth in my "Philosophy of Mysticism") have taken quite another course and are only further justified by these experiences, I find as little subjective grounds for combating these facts as objective ones.

He adds :

I now have the empirical experience of the existence of such transcendental beings, which I am convinced of by the evidence of my senses of sight, hearing, and feeling, as well as by their own intelligent communications. Under these circumstances, being led by two methods of inquiry to the self-same goal, I must indeed be abandoned of the gods if I did not recognize the fact of the immortality—or rather let us say, since the proofs

do not extend farther—the continued existence of man after death.

Carl du Prel died in 1899. His contribution to the subject is probably the greatest yet made by any German. On the other hand, a formidable opponent was found there in Eduard von Hartmann, author of "The Philosophy of the Unconscious," who wrote a brochure in 1885 called "Spiritism." Commenting upon this performance, C. C. Massey wrote :*

Now for the first time, a man of commanding intellectual position has dealt fairly by us as an opponent. He has taken the trouble to get up the facts, if not quite thoroughly, at least to an extent that indisputably qualifies him for critical examination. And while formally declining an unreserved acceptance of the evidence, he has come to the conclusion that the existence in the human organism of more forces and capacities than exact science has investigated is sufficiently accredited by historical and contemporary testimony. He even urges research by State-appointed and paid commissions. He repudiates, with all the authority of a philosopher and man of science, the supposition that the facts are *a priori* incredible or "contrary to the laws of nature." He exposes the irrelevance of "exposures," and blows to the winds the stupid parallel between mediums and conjurers. And if his application of the psychology of somnambulism to the phenomena results, in his view, in "ruling out" spirits altogether, on the other hand it contains information to the public which is highly important for the protection of mediums.

Massey says further that from the standpoint of von Hartmann's philosophy the agency of spirits is

* *Light*, 1885, p. 404. It should be noted that Charles Carlton Massey, the barrister, and Gerald Massey, the poet, are separate people with nothing in common save that both were Spiritualists.

inadmissible, and personal immortality is a delusion. "The issue of psychological philosophy is now between his school and that of du Prel and Hellenbach."

Alexander Aksakof replied to von Hartmann in his monthly journal *Psychische Studien.*

Aksakof points out that Hartmann had no practical experience whatever, that he bestowed insufficient attention to phenomena which did not fit into his mode of explanation, and that there were many phenomena which were quite unknown to him.

Hartmann, for instance, did not believe in the objectivity of materialization phenomena. Aksakof ably sets out with full details a number of cases which decidedly negative Hartmann's conclusions.

Aksakof refers to Baron Lazar Hellenbach, a Spiritualist, as the first philosophical investigator of the phenomena in Germany, and says: "Zöllner's admission of the reality of the mediumistic phenomena produced in Germany an immense sensation." In many ways it would appear that von Hartmann wrote with an imperfect knowledge of the subject.

Germany has produced few great mediums, unless Frau Anna Rothe can be classed as such. It is possible that this woman resorted to fraud when her psychic powers failed her, but that she had such powers in a high degree is clearly shown by the evidence at the trial after her alleged "exposure" in 1902.

The medium, after being kept in prison for twelve months and three weeks before being brought to trial, was sentenced to eighteen months imprisonment and

a fine of five hundred marks. At the trial many people of standing gave evidence in her favour, among whom were Herr Stöcker, former Court Chaplain, and Judge Sulzers, president of the High Court of Appeal, Zürich. The Judge stated on oath that Frau Rothe put him in communication with the spirits of his wife and father, who said things to him which the medium could not possibly have invented, because they dealt with matters unknown to any mortal. He also declared that flowers of the rarest kind were produced out of the air in a room flooded with light. His evidence caused a sensation.

It is clear that the result of the trial was a foregone conclusion. It was a repetition of the position of the magistrate, Mr. Flowers, in the Slade case. The German legal luminary in his preliminary address said :

> The Court cannot allow itself to criticize the Spiritistic theory, for it must be acknowledged that science, with the generality of men of culture, declares supernatural manifestations to be impossible.

In the face of that no evidence could have any weight.

Of recent years two names stand out in connexion with the subject. The one is Dr. Schrenck Notzing, of Munich, whose fine laboratory work has been already treated in the chapter on Ectoplasm. The other is the famous Dr. Hans Driesch, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Leipzig. He has recently declared that "the actuality of psychical phenomena is doubted to-day only by the incorrigible dogmatist." He made this statement in the course of

a lecture at the London University in 1924, afterwards published in *The Quest.** He went on to say :

> These phenomena have had, however, a hard struggle to gain recognition; and the chief reason why they have had to fight so strenuously, is because they utterly refused to dovetail with orthodox psychology and natural science, such as these both were, up to the end of last century, at any rate.

Professor Driesch points out that natural science and psychology have undergone a radical change since the beginning of the present century, and proceeds to show how psychical phenomena link up with "normal" natural sciences. He remarks that if the latter refused to recognize their kinship with the former, it would make no difference to the truth of psychical phenomena. He shows, with various biological illustrations, how the mechanistic theory is overthrown. He expounds his vitalistic theory " to establish a closer contact between the phenomena of normal biology and the physical phenomena in the domain of psychical research."

Italy has, in some ways, been superior to all other European states in its treatment of Spiritualism—and this in spite of the constant opposition of the Roman Catholic Church, which has most illogically stigmatized as diabolism in others that which it has claimed as a special mark of sanctity in itself. The *Acta Sanctorum* are one long chronicle of psychic phenomena with levitations, apports, prophecy, and all the other signs of mediumistic power. This Church has, how-

* July, 1924.

ever, always persecuted Spiritualism. Powerful as it is, it will find in time that it has encountered something stronger than itself.

Of modern Italians the great Mazzini was a Spiritualist in days when Spiritualism had hardly formulated itself, and his associate Garibaldi was president of a psychic society. In a letter to a friend in 1849, Mazzini sketched his religio-philosophical system which curiously foreshadowed the more recent Spiritualistic view. He substituted a temporary purgatory for an eternal hell, postulated a bond of union between this world and the next, defined a hierarchy of spiritual beings, and foresaw a continual progression towards supreme perfection.

Italy has been very rich in mediums, but she has been even more fortunate in having men of science who were wise enough to follow facts wherever they might lead. Among these numerous investigators, all of whom were convinced of the reality of psychic phenomena, though it cannot be claimed that all accepted the Spiritualistic view, there are to be found such names as Ermacora, Schiaparelli, Lombroso, Bozzano, Morselli, Chiaia, Pictet, Foa, Porro, Brofferio, Bottazzi, and many others. They have had the advantage of a wonderful subject in Eusapia Palladino, as has already been described, but there have been a succession of other powerful mediums, including such names as Politi, Carancini, Zuccarini, Lucia Sordi, and especially Linda Gazzera. Here as elsewhere, however, the first impulse came from the English-speaking countries. It was the visit of D. D. Home to

Florence in 1855, and the subsequent visit of Mrs. Guppy in 1868 which opened the furrow. Signor Damiani was the first great investigator, and it was he who in 1872 discovered the powers of Palladino.

Damiani's mantle fell upon Dr. G. B. Ermacora, who was founder and co-editor with Dr. Finzi of the *Rivista di Studi Psichici.* He died at Rovigo in his fortieth year at the hand of a homicide—a very great loss to the cause. His adhesion to it, and his enthusiasm, drew in others of equal standing. Thus Porro, in his glowing obituary, wrote :

Lombroso found himself at Milan with three young physicists, entirely devoid of all prejudice, Ermacora, Finzi and Gerosa, with two profound thinkers who had already exhausted the philosophical side of the question, the German du Prel and the Russian Aksakof, with another philosopher of acute mind and vast learning, Brofferio; and lastly, with a great astronomer, Schiaparelli, and with an able physiologist, Richet.

He adds :

It would be difficult to collect a better assortment of learned men giving the necessary guarantees of seriousness, of varied competence, of technical ability in experimenting, of sagacity and prudence in coming to conclusions.

He continues :

While Brofferio, by his weighty book " Per lo Spiritismo " (Milan, 1892), demolished one by one the arguments of the opposite side, collecting, co-ordinating, and classifying with incomparable dialectical skill the proofs in favour of his thesis, Ermacora applied to its demonstration all the resources of a robust mind trained to the use of the experimental method; and he took so much pleasure

in this new and fertile study, that he entirely abandoned those researches in electricity which had already caused him to be looked upon as a successor to Faraday and Maxwell.

Dr. Ercole Chiaia, who died in 1905, was also an ardent worker and propagandist to whom many distinguished men of European reputation owed their first knowledge of psychical phenomena, among others, Lombroso, Professor Bianchi of the University of Naples, Schiaparelli, Flournoy, Professor Porro of the University of Genoa, and Colonel de Rochas. Lombroso wrote of him :

You are right to honour highly the memory of Ercole Chiaia. In a country where there is such a horror of what is new, it required great courage and a noble soul to become the apostle of theories which have met with ridicule, and to do so with that tenacity, that energy, which always characterized Chiaia. It is to him that many owe—myself among others—the privilege of seeing a new world open out to psychical investigation—and this by the only way which exists to convince men of culture, that is to say, by direct observation.

Sardou, Richet, and Morselli also paid tributes to the work of Chiaia.*

Chiaia did an important work in leading Lombroso, the eminent alienist, to investigate the subject. After his first experiments with Eusapia Palladino, in March, 1891, Lombroso wrote :

I am quite ashamed and grieved at having opposed with so much tenacity the possibility of the so-called Spiritistic facts.

* "Annals of Psychical Science," Vol. II (1905), pp. 261–262.

At first he only gave his assent to the facts, while still opposed to the theory associated with them. But even this partial admission caused a sensation in Italy and throughout the world. Aksakof wrote to Dr. Chiaia: " Glory to M. Lombroso for his noble words ! Glory to you for your devotion ! "

Lombroso affords a good example of the conversion of an utter materialist, after a long and careful examination of the facts. In 1900 he wrote to Professor Falcomer :

> I am like a little pebble on the beach. As yet I am uncovered, but I feel that each tide draws me a little closer to the sea.

He ended, as we know, by becoming a complete believer, a convinced Spiritualist, and published his celebrated book, " After Death—What ? "

Ernesto Bozzano, who was born in Genoa in 1862, has devoted thirty years to psychical research, embodying his conclusions in thirty long monographs. He will be remembered for his incisive criticism * of Mr. Podmore's slighting references to Mr. Stainton Moses. It is entitled, " A Defence of William Stainton Moses." Bozzano, in company with Professors Morselli and Porro, had a long series of experiments with Eusapia Palladino. After consideration of the subjective and objective phenomena, he was led " logically and of necessity " to give full adherence to the Spiritistic hypothesis.

Enrico Morselli, Professor of Psychiatry at Genoa, was for many years, as he himself says, a bitter sceptic

* " Annals of Psychical Science," Vol. I (1905), pp. 75–129.

with regard to the objective reality of psychic phenomena. From 1901 onwards he had thirty sittings with Eusapia Palladino, and became completely convinced of the facts, if not of the spirit theory. He published his observations in a book which Professor Richet describes as "a model of erudition" ("Psicologia e Spiritismo," 2 Vols., Turin, 1908). Lombroso, i a very generous review* of this book, refers to the author's scepticism regarding certain phenomena he observed.

Yes. Morselli commits the same fault as Flournoy with Miss Smith,† of torturing his own strong ingenuity to find not true and not credible the things which he himself declares that he saw, and which really occurred. For instance, during the first few days after the apparition of his own mother, he admitted to me that he had seen her and had quite a conversation in gestures with her, in which she pointed almost with bitterness to his spectacles and his partially bald head, and made him remember how long ago she had left him a fine, bold young man.

When Morselli asked his mother for a proof of identity, she touched his forehead with her hand, seeking for a wart there, but because she first touched the right side and then the left, on which the wart really was, Morselli would not accept this as evidence of his mother's presence. Lombroso, with more experience, points out to him the awkwardness of spirits using the instrumentality of a medium for the first

* "Annals of Psychical Science," Vol. VII (1908), p. 376.

† Helene Smith, the medium in Flournoy's book, "From India to the Planet Mars."

time. The truth was that Morselli had, strangely enough, the utmost repugnance to the appearance of his mother through a medium against his will. Lombroso cannot understand this feeling. He says :

I confess that I not only do not share it, but, on the contrary, when I saw my mother again, I felt one of the most pleasing inward excitements of my life, a pleasure that was almost a spasm, which aroused a sense, not of resentment, but of gratitude to the medium who threw my mother again into my arms after so many years, and this great event caused me to forget, not once, but many times, the humble position of Eusapia, who had done for me, even were it purely automatically, that which no giant in power and thought could ever have done.

Morselli is in much the same position as Professor Richet with regard to psychical research, but, like the latter distinguished scientist, he has been the means of powerfully influencing public opinion to a more enlightened view of the subject.

Morselli speaks strongly about the neglect of science. Writing in 1907, he says :

The question of Spiritism has been discussed for over fifty years; and although no one can at present foresee when it will be settled, all are now agreed in assigning to it great importance among the problems left as a legacy by the nineteenth century to the twentieth. Meanwhile, no one can fail to recognize that Spiritism is a strong current or tendency in contemporary thought. If for many years academic science has depreciated the whole category of facts which Spiritism has, for good or ill, rightly or wrongly, absorbed and assimilated, to form the elements of its doctrinal system, so much the worse for science! And worse still for the scientists who have

remained deaf and blind before all the affirmations, not of credulous sectarians, but of serious and worthy observers such as Crookes, Lodge and Richet. I am not ashamed to say that I myself, as far as my modest power went, have contributed to this obstinate scepticism, up to the day on which I was enabled to break the chains in which my absolutist preconceptions had bound my judgment.*

It is to be noted that the majority of the Italian professors, while giving adherence to psychical facts, decline to follow the conclusions of those they call the Spiritists. De Vesme makes this clear when he says :

It is most important to point out that the revival of interest in these questions, which has been displayed by the public in Italy, would not have been produced so easily if the scientific men who have just proclaimed the objective authenticity of these mediumistic phenomena had not been careful to add that the recognition of the *facts* does not by any means imply the acceptance of the Spiritistic hypothesis.

There was, however, a strong minority who saw the full meaning of the revelation.

* "Annals of Psychical Science," Vol V (1907), p. 322

CHAPTER XXII

SOME GREAT MODERN MEDIUMS

THERE is always a certain monotony in writing about physical signs of external intelligence, because they take stereotyped forms limited in their nature. They are amply sufficient for their purpose, which is to demonstrate the presence of invisible powers unknown to material science, but both their methods of production and the results lead to endless reiteration. This manifestation in itself, occurring as it does in every country on the globe, should convince anyone who thinks seriously upon the subject that he is in the presence of fixed laws, and that it is not a sporadic succession of miracles, but a real science which is being developed. It is in their ignorant and arrogant contempt of this fact that opponents have sinned. "*Ils ne comprennent pas qu'il y a des lois*," wrote Madame Bisson, after some fatuous attempt on the part of the doctors of the Sorbonne to produce ectoplasm under conditions which negatived their own experiment. As will be seen by what has gone before, a great physical medium can produce the Direct Voice apart from his own vocal organs, telekenesis, or movement of objects at a distance, raps, or percussions of ectoplasm, levitations, apports, or the bringing of objects from a distance, materializations, either

of faces, limbs, or of complete figures, trance talkings and writings, writings within closed slates, and luminous phenomena, which take many forms. All of these manifestations the author has many times seen, and as they have been exhibited to him by the leading mediums of his day, he ventures to vary the form of this history by speaking of the more recent sensitives from his own personal knowledge and observation.

It is understood that some cultivate one gift and some another, while those who can exhibit all round forms of power are not usually so proficient in any one as the man or woman who specializes upon it. You have so much psychic power upon which to draw, and you may turn it all into one deep channel or disperse it over several superficial ones. Now and then some wonder-man appears like D. D. Home, who carries with him the whole range of mediumship—but it is rare.

The greatest trance medium with whom the author is acquainted is Mrs. Osborne Leonard. The outstanding merit of her gift is that it is, as a rule, continuous. It is not broken up by long pauses or irrelevant intervals, but it flows on exactly as if the person alleged to be speaking were actually present. The usual procedure is that Mrs. Leonard, a pleasant, gentle, middle-aged, ladylike woman, sinks into slumber, upon which her voice changes entirely, and what comes through purports to be from her little control, Feda. The control talks in rather broken English in a high voice, with many little intimacies and

pleasantries which give the impression of a sweet, amiable and intelligent child. She acts as spokesman for the waiting spirit, but the spirit occasionally breaks in also, which leads to sudden changes from the first person singular to the third, such as: "I am here, Father. He says he wants to speak. I am so well and so happy. He says he finds it so wonderful to be able to talk to you . . ." and so on.

At her best, it is a wonderful experience. Upon one occasion the author had received a long series of messages purporting to deal with the future fate of the world, through his wife's hand and voice in his own Home Circle. When he visited Mrs. Leonard, he said no word of this, nor had he at that time spoken of the matter in any public way. Yet he had hardly sat down and arranged the writing-pad upon which he proposed to take notes of what came through, when his son announced his presence, and spoke with hardly a break for an hour. During this long monologue he showed an intimate knowledge of all that had come through in the Home Circle, and also of small details of family life, utterly foreign to the medium. In the whole interview he made no mistake as to fact, and yet many facts were mentioned. A short section of the less personal part of it may be quoted here as a sample:

There is so much false progress of material mechanical kind. That is not progress. If you build a car to go one thousand miles this year, then you build one to go two thousand miles next year. No one is the better for that. We want real progress—to understand the power

of mind and spirit and to realize the fact that there *is* a spirit world.

So much help could be given from our side if only people on the earth would fit themselves to take it, but we cannot force our help on those who are not prepared for it. That is your work, to prepare people for us. Some of them are so hopelessly ignorant, but sow the seed, even if you do not see it coming up.

The clergy are so limited in their ideas and so bound by a system which should be an obsolete one. It is like serving up last week's dinner instead of having a new one. We want fresh spiritual food, not a hash of the old food. We know how wonderful Christ is. We realize His love and His power. He can help both us and you. But He will do so by kindling fresh fires, not by raking always in the old ashes.

That is what we want—the fire of enthusiasm on the two altars of imagination and knowledge. Some people would do away with the imagination, but it is often the gateway to knowledge. The Churches have had the right teaching, but they have not put it to practical use.

One must be able to demonstrate one's spiritual knowledge in a practical form. The plane on which you live is a practical one in which you are expected to put your knowledge and belief into action. On our plane knowledge and faith *are* action—one thinks a thing and at once puts it into practice, but on earth there are so many who say a thing is right, but never do it. The Church teaches, but does not demonstrate its own teaching. The blackboard is useful at times, you know. That is what you need. You should teach, and then demonstrate upon the blackboard. Thus physical phenomena are really most important. There will be some in this upheaval. It is difficult for us to manifest physically now because the greater bulk of collective thought is against and not for

us. But when the upheaval comes, people will be shaken out of their pig-headed, ignorant, antagonistic attitude to us, which will immediately open the way to a fuller demonstration than we have hitherto been able to give.

It is like a wall now that we have to batter against, and we lose ninety per cent. of our power in the battering and trying to find a weak spot in this wall of ignorance through which we can creep to you. But many of you are chiselling and hammering from your side to let us through. You have not built the wall, and you are helping us to penetrate it. In a little while you will have so weakened it that it will crumble, and instead of creeping through with difficulty we shall all emerge together in a glorious band. That will be the climax—the meeting of spirit and matter.

If the truth of Spiritualism depended upon Mrs. Leonard's powers alone, the case would be an overwhelming one, since she has seen many hundreds of clients and seldom failed to give complete satisfaction. There are, however, many clairvoyants whose powers are little inferior to those of Mrs. Leonard, and who would perhaps equal her if they showed the same restraint in their use. No fee will ever tempt Mrs. Leonard to take more than two clients in the day, and it is to this, no doubt, that the sustained excellence of her results are due.

Among London clairvoyants whom the author has used, Mr. Vout Peters is entitled to a high place. One one occasion a very remarkable piece of evidence came through him, as is narrated elsewhere.* Another excellent medium upon her day is Mrs.

* "The New Revelation," p. 53.

Annie Brittain. The author was in the habit of sending mourners to this medium during the war-time, and filed the letters in which they narrated their experience. The result is a very remarkable one. Out of the first hundred cases eighty were quite successful in establishing touch with the object of their inquiry. In some cases the result was overpoweringly evidential, and the amount of comfort given to the inquirers can hardly be exaggerated. The revulsion of feeling when the mourner suddenly finds that death is not silent, but that a still small voice, speaking in very happy accents, can still come back is an overpowering one. One lady wrote that she had fully determined to take her own life, so bleak and empty was existence, but that she left Mrs. Brittain's parlour with renewed hope in her heart. When one hears that such a medium has been dragged up to a police-court, sworn down by ignorant policemen, and condemned by a still more ignorant magistrate, one feels that one is indeed living in the dark ages of the world's history.

Like Mrs. Leonard, Mrs. Brittain has a kindly little child familiar named Belle. In his extensive researches the author has made the acquaintance of many of these little creatures in different parts of the world, finding the same character, the same voice and the same pleasant ways in all. This similarity would in itself show any reasoning being that some general law was at work. Feda, Belle, Iris, Harmony, and many more, prattle in their high falsetto voices, and the world is the better for their presence and ministrations.

Miss McCreadie is another notable London clairvoyante belonging to the older school, and bringing with her an atmosphere of religion which is sometimes wanting. There are many others, but no notice would be complete without an allusion to the remarkable higher teaching which comes from Johannes and the other controls of Mrs. Hester Dowden, the daughter of the famous Shakespearean scholar. A reference should be made also to Captain Bartlett, whose wonderful writings and drawings enabled Mr. Bligh Bond to expose ruins of two chapels at Glastonbury which were so buried that only the clairvoyant sense could have defined their exact position. Readers of "The Gate of Remembrance" will understand the full force of this remarkable episode.

Direct Voice phenomena are different from mere clairvoyance and trance-speaking in that the sounds do not appear to come from the medium but externalize themselves often to a distance of several yards, continue to sound when the mouth is filled with water, and even break into two or three voices simultaneously. On these occasions an aluminium trumpet is used to magnify the voice, and also, as some suppose, to form a small dark chamber in which the actual vocal cords used by the spirit can become materialized. It is an interesting fact, and one which has caused much misgiving to those whose experience is limited, that the first sounds usually resemble the voice of the medium. This very soon passes away and the voice either becomes neutral or may closely resemble that of the deceased. It is possible that the reason of this phe-

nomenon is that the ectoplasm from which the phenomena are produced is drawn from him or her, and carries with it some of his or her peculiarities until such time as the outside force gains command. It is well that the sceptic should be patient and await developments, for I have known an ignorant and self-opinionated investigator take for granted that there was fraud through noting the resemblance of voices, and then wreck the whole séance by foolish horseplay, whereas had he waited his doubts would soon have been resolved.

The author has had the experience with Mrs. Wriedt of hearing the Direct Voice, accompanied by raps on the trumpet, in broad daylight, with the medium seated some yards away. This disposes of the idea that the medium in the dark can change her position. It is not uncommon to have two or three spirit voices speaking or singing at the same moment, which is in turn fatal to the theory of ventriloquism. The trumpet, too, which is often decorated with a small spot of luminous paint, may be seen darting about far out of reach of the medium's hands. On one occasion at the house of Mr. Dennis Bradley, the author saw the illuminated trumpet whirling round and tapping on the ceiling as a moth might have done. The medium (Valiantine) was afterwards asked to stand upon his chair, and it was found that with the trumpet in his extended arm he was unable to touch the ceiling. This was witnessed by a circle of eight.

Mrs. Wriedt was born in Detroit some fifty years ago, and is perhaps better known in England than any

American medium. The reality of her powers may best be judged by a short description of results. On the occasion of a visit to the author's house in the country she sat with the author, his wife, and his secretary, in a well-lighted room. A hymn was sung, and before the first verse was ended a fifth voice of excellent quality joined in and continued to the end. All three observers were ready to depose that Mrs. Wriedt herself was singing all the time. At the evening sitting a succession of friends came through with every possible sign of their identity. One sitter was approached by her father, recently dead, who began by the hard, dry cough which had appeared in his last illness. He discussed the question of some legacy in a perfectly rational manner. A friend of the author's, a rather irritable Anglo-Indian, manifested, so far as a voice could do so, reproducing exactly the fashion of speech, giving the name, and alluding to facts of his lifetime. Another sitter had a visit from one who claimed to be his grand-aunt. The relationship was denied, but on inquiry at home it was found that he had actually had an aunt of that name who died in his childhood. Telepathy has to be strained very far to cover such cases.

Altogether the author has experimented with at least twenty producers of the Direct Voice, and has been much struck by the difference in the volume of the sound with different mediums. Often it is so faint that it is only with some difficulty that one can distinguish the message. There are few experiences more tensely painful than to strain one's ears and to hear in

the darkness the panting, labouring, broken accents beside one, which might mean so much if one could but distinguish them. On the other hand, the author has known what it was to be considerably embarrassed when in the bedroom of a crowded Chicago hotel a voice has broken forth which could only be compared with the roaring of a lion. The medium upon that occasion was a slim young American lad, who could not possibly have produced such a sound with his normal organs. Between these two extremes every gradation of volume and vibration may be encountered.

George Valiantine, who has already been mentioned, would perhaps come second if the author had to make a list of the great Direct Voice mediums with whom he has experimented. He was examined by the committee of the *Scientific American* and turned down on the excuse that an electric apparatus showed that he left his chair whenever the voice sounded. The instance already given by the author, where the trumpet circled outside the reach of the medium, is proof positive that his results certainly do not depend upon his leaving his chair, and their effect depends not only on how the voice is produced, but even more on what the voice says. Those who have read Dennis Bradley's "Towards the Stars" and his subsequent book narrating the long series of sittings held at Kingston Vale, will realize that no possible explanation will cover Valiantine's mediumship save the plain fact that he has exceptional psychic powers. They vary very much with the conditions, but at their best they stand very high. Like Mrs. Wriedt, he does not go into

trance, and yet his condition cannot be called normal. There are semi-trance conditions which await the investigations of the student of the future.

Mr. Valiantine is by profession a manufacturer in a small town in Pennsylvania. He is a quiet, gentle, kindly man, and as he is in the prime of life, a very useful career should still lie before him.

As a materialization medium, Jonson, of Toledo, who afterwards resided in Los Angeles, stands alone, so far as the author's experience carries him. Possibly his wife's name should be bracketed with his, since they work together. The peculiarity of Jonson's work is that he is in full view of the circle, sitting outside the cabinet, while his wife stands near the cabinet and superintends the proceedings. Anyone who desires a very complete account of a Jonson séance will find it in the author's " Our Second American Adventure," and his mediumship is also treated very thoroughly by Admiral Usborne Moore.* The admiral, who was among the greatest of psychic researchers, sat many times with Jonson, and obtained the co-operation of an ex-chief of the United States Secret Service, who established a watch and found nothing against the medium. When it is remembered that Toledo was at that time a limited town, and that sometimes as many as twenty different personalities manifested in a single sitting, it will be realized that personification presents insuperable difficulties. Upon the occasion of the sitting at which the author was present, a long succession of figures came, one at a

* "Glimpses of the Next State," pp. 195, 322.

time, from a small cabinet. They were old and young, men, women, and children. The light from a red lamp was sufficient to enable a sitter to see the figures clearly but not to distinguish the details of the features. Some of the figures remained out for not less than twenty minutes and conversed freely with the circle, answering all questions put to them. No man can give another a blank cheque for honesty and certify that he not only is honest but always will be. The author can only say that on that particular occasion he was perfectly convinced of the genuine nature of the phenomena, and that he has no reason to doubt it on any other occasion.

Jonson is a powerfully built man, and though he is now verging upon old age his psychic powers are still unimpaired. He is the centre of a circle at Pasadena, near Los Angeles, who meet every week to profit by his remarkable powers. The late Professor Larkin, the astronomer, was a habitué of the circle, and assured the author of his complete belief in the honesty of the mediumship.

Materialization may have been more common in the past than in the present. Those who read such books as Brackett's "Materialised Apparitions," or Miss Marryat's "There Is No Death," would say so. But in these days complete materialization is very rare. The author was present at an alleged materialization by one Thompson, in New York, but the proceedings carried no conviction, and the man was shortly afterwards arrested for trickery under circumstances which left no doubt as to his guilt.

There are certain mediums who, without specializing in any particular way, can exhibit a wide range of preternatural manifestations. Of all whom the author has encountered he would give precedence for variety and consistency to Miss Ada Besinnet, of Toledo, in America, and to Evan Powell, formerly of Merthyr Tydvil, in Wales. Both are admirable mediums and kindly, good people who are worthy of the wonderful gifts which have been entrusted to them. In the case of Miss Besinnet the manifestations include the Direct Voice, two or more often sounding at the same time. One masculine control, named Dan, has a remarkable male baritone voice, and anyone who has heard it can certainly never doubt that it is independent of the lady's organism. A female voice occasionally joins with Dan to make a most tuneful duet. Remarkable whistling, in which there seems to be no pause for the intake of breath, is another feature of this mediumship. So also is the production of very brilliant lights. These appear to be small solid luminous objects, for the author had on one occasion the curious experience of having one upon his moustache. Had a large firefly settled there the effect would have been much the same. The Direct Voices of Miss Besinnet when they take the form of messages —as apart from the work of the controls—are not strong and are often hardly audible. The most remarkable, however, of all her powers is the appearance of phantom faces which appear in an illuminated patch in front of the sitter. They would seem to be mere masks, as there is no appearance of depth to

them. In most cases they represent dim faces, which occasionally bear a resemblance to that of the medium when the health of the lady or the power of the circle is low. When the conditions are good they are utterly dissimilar. Upon two occasions the author has seen faces to which he could absolutely swear, the one being his mother and the other his nephew, Oscar Hornung, a young officer killed in the war. They were as clear-cut and visible as ever in life. On the other hand, there have been evenings when no clear recognition could be obtained, though among the faces were some which could only be described as angelic in their beauty and purity.*

On a level with Miss Besinnet is Mr. Evan Powell, with the same variety but not always the same type of powers. Powell's luminous phenomena are equally good. His voice production is better. The author has heard the spirit voices as loud as those of ordinary human talk, and recalls one occasion when three of them were talking simultaneously, one to Lady Cowan, one to Sir James Marchant, and one to Sir Robert McAlpine. Movements of objects are common in the Powell séances, and on one occasion a stand weighing 60 lb. was suspended for some time over the author's head. Evan Powell always insists upon being very securely tied during his séances, which is done, he claims, for his own protection, since he cannot be responsible for his own movements when he is in a

* Various estimates and experiences of this mediumship will be found in the author's "Our American Adventure," pp 124-132; Admiral Moore's "Glimpses of the Next State," pp. 226, 312; and finally Mr. Hewat McKenzie's report, *Psychic Science*, April, 1922.

trance. This throws an interesting sidelight upon the possible nature of some exposures. There is a good deal of evidence, not only that the medium may unconsciously, or under the influence of suggestion from the audience, put himself into a false position, but that evil forces which are either mischievous or are actively opposed to the good work done by Spiritualism, may obsess the entranced body and cause it to do suspicious things so as to discredit the medium. Some sensible remarks upon this subject, founded upon personal experience, have been made by Professor Haraldur Nielsson, of Iceland, when commenting upon a case where one of the circle committed a perfectly senseless fraud, and a spirit afterwards admitted that it was done by its agency and instigation.* On the whole, Evan Powell may be said to have the widest endowment of spiritual gifts of any medium at present in England. He preaches the doctrines of Spiritualism both in his own person and while under control, and he can in himself exhibit nearly the whole range of phenomena. It is a pity that his business as a coal merchant in Devonshire prevents his constant presence in London.

Slate-writing mediumship is a remarkable manifestation. It is possessed in a high degree by Mrs. Pruden, of Cincinnati, who has recently visited Great Britain and exhibited her wonderful powers to a number of people. The author has sat with her several times, and has explained the methods in detail. As the passage is a short one and may

* *Psychic Science*, July, 1925.

make the matter clear to the unitiated, it is here transcribed:

It was our good fortune now to come once again into contact with a really great medium in Mrs. Pruden of Cincinnati, who had come to Chicago for my lectures. We had a sitting in the Blackstone Hotel, through the courtesy of her host, Mr. Holmyard, and the results were splendid. She is an elderly, kindly woman with a motherly manner. Her particular gift was slate-writing which I had never examined before.

I had heard that there were trick slates, but she was anxious to use mine and allowed me carefully to examine hers. She makes a dark cabinet by draping the table, and holds the slate under it, while you may hold the other corner of it. Her other hand is free and visible. The slate is double with a little bit of pencil put in between.

After a delay of half an hour the writing began. It was the strangest feeling to hold the slate and to feel the thrill and vibration of the pencil as it worked away inside. We had each written a question on a bit of paper and cast it down, carefully folded, on the ground in the shadow of the drapery, that psychic forces might have correct conditions for their work, which is always interfered with by light.

Presently each of us got an answer to our question upon the slate, and were allowed to pick up our folded papers and see that they had not been opened. The room, I may say, was full of daylight and the medium could not stoop without our seeing it.

I had some business this morning of a partly spiritual, partly material nature with a Dr. Gelbert, a French inventor. I asked in my question if this were wise. The answer on the slate was—"Trust Dr. Gelbert. Kingsley." I had not mentioned Dr. Gelbert's name in my question, nor did Mrs. Pruden know anything of the matter.

My wife got a long message from a dear friend, signed with her name. The name was a true signature. Altogether it was a most utterly convincing demonstration. Sharp, clear raps upon the table joined continually in our conversation.*

The general method and result is the same as that used by Mr. Pierre Keeler, of the United States. The author has not been able to arrange a sitting with this medium, but a friend who did so had results which put the truth of the phenomena beyond all question. In his case he received answers to questions placed inside sealed envelopes, so that the favourite explanation, that the medium in some way sees the slips of paper, is ruled out. Anyone who has sat with Mrs. Pruden will know, however, that she never stoops, and that the slips of paper lie at the feet of the sitter.

A remarkable form of mediumship is crystal gazing, where the pictures are actually visible to the eye of the sitter. The author has only once encountered this, under the mediumship of a lady from Yorkshire. The pictures were clear-cut and definite, and succeeded each other with an interval of fog. They did not appear to be relevant to any past or future event, but consisted of small views, dim faces, and other subjects of the kind.

Such are a few of the varied forms of spirit power which have been given to us as an antidote to materialism. The highest forms of all are not physical but are to be found in the inspired writings of such men

* "Our American Adventure," pp. 144-145.

as Davis, Stainton Moses, or Vale Owen. It cannot be too often repeated that the mere fact that a message comes to us in preternatural fashion is no guarantee that it is either high or true. The self-deluded, pompous person, the shallow reasoner, and the deliberate deceiver all exist upon the invisible side of life, and all may get their worthless communications transmitted through uncritical agents. Each must be scanned and weighed, and much must be neglected, while the residue is worthy of our most respectful attention. But even the best can never be final and is often amended, as in the case of Stainton Moses, when he had reached the Other Side. That great teacher admitted through Mrs. Piper that there were points upon which he had been ill-informed.

The mediums mentioned have been chosen as types of their various classes, but there are many others who deserve to be recorded in detail if there were space. The author has sat several times with Sloan and with Phœnix, of Glasgow, both of whom have remarkable powers which cover almost the whole range of the spiritual gifts, and both are, or were, most unworldly men with a saintly disregard of the things of this life. Mrs. Falconer, of Edinburgh, is also a trance medium of considerable power. Of the earlier generation, the author has experienced the mediumship of Husk and of Craddock, both of whom had their strong hours and their weak ones. Mrs. Susanna Harris has also afforded good evidence upon physical lines, as has Mrs. Wagner, of Los Angeles, while among amateurs John Ticknor, of New York, and

Mr. Nugent, of Belfast, are in the very first flight of trance mediumship.

In connexion with John Ticknor the author may quote an experiment which he made and reported in the "Proceedings" of the American Society for Psychical Research, a body which has been held back in the past by non-conductors almost as much as its parent in England. In this instance the author took a careful record of the pulse-beat when Mr. Ticknor was normal, when he was controlled by Colonel Lee, one of his spirit guides, and when he was under the influence of Black Hawk, a Red Indian control. The respective figures were 82, 100 and 118.

Mrs. Roberts Johnson is another medium who is unequal in her results, but who has at her best a very remarkable power with the Direct Voice. The religious element is wanting at her sittings, and the jocose North Country youths who come through create an atmosphere which amuses the sitters, but which may repel those who approach the subject with feelings of solemnity. The deep Scottish voice of the Glasgow control, David Duguid, a famous medium himself in his lifetime, is beyond all imitation by the throat of a woman, and his remarks are full of dignity and wisdom. The Rev. Dr. Lamond has assured me that Duguid at one of these sittings reminded him of an incident which had occurred between them in life—a sufficient proof of the reality of the individual.

There is no more curious and dramatic phase of psychic phenomenon than the apport. It is so startling that it is difficult to persuade the sceptic as to its

possibility, and even the Spiritualist can hardly credit it until examples actually come his way. The author's first introduction to occult knowledge was due largely to the late General Drayson, who at that time—nearly forty years ago—was receiving through an amateur medium a constant succession of apports of the most curious description—Indian lamps, amulets, fresh fruit, and other things. So amazing a phenomenon, and one so easily simulated, was too much for a beginner, and it retarded rather than helped progress. Since then, however, the author has met the editor of a well-known paper who used the same medium after General Drayson's death, and he continued, under rigid conditions, to get similar apports. The author has been forced, therefore, to reconsider his view and to believe that he has underrated both the honesty of the medium and the intelligence of her sitter.

Mr. Bailey, of Melbourne, appears to be a very remarkable apport medium, and the author has no confidence in his alleged exposure at Grenoble. Bailey's own account is that he was the victim of a religious conspiracy, and in view of his long record of success it is more probable than that he should, in some mysterious way, have smuggled a live bird into a séance room in which he knew that he would be stripped and examined. The explanation of the Psychic Researchers, that the bird was concealed in his intestines, is a supreme example of the absurdities which incredulity can produce. The author had one experience of an apport with Bailey which it is surely impossible to explain away. It was thus described:

We then placed Mr. Bailey in the corner of the room, lowered the lights without turning them out, and waited. Almost at once he breathed very heavily, as one in a trance, and soon said something in a foreign tongue which was unintelligible to me. One of our friends, Mr. Cochrane, recognized it as Indian, and at once answered, a few sentences being interchanged. In English the voice then said that he was a Hindoo control who was used to bring apports for the medium, and that he would, he hoped, be able to bring one for us. "Here it is," he said, a moment later, and the medium's hand was extended with something in it. The light was turned full on and we found it was a very perfect bird's nest, beautifully constructed of some very fine fibre mixed with moss. It stood about two inches high and had no sign of any flattening which would have come with concealment. The size would be nearly three inches across. In it lay a small egg, white, with tiny brown speckles. The medium, or rather the Hindoo control acting through the medium, placed the egg on his palm and broke it, some fine albumen squirting out. There was no trace of yolk. "We are not allowed to interfere with life," said he. "If it had been fertilized we could not have taken it." These words were said before he broke it, so that he was aware of the condition of the egg, which certainly seems remarkable.

"Where did it come from?" I asked.

"From India."

"What bird is it?"

"They call it the Jungle Sparrow."

The nest remained in my possession and I spent a morning with Mr. Chubb, of the local museum, to ascertain if it was really the nest of such a bird. It seemed too small for an Indian Sparrow, and yet we could not match either nest or egg among the Australian types. Some of Mr. Bailey's other nests and eggs have been actually identified.

Surely it is a fair argument that while it is conceivable that such birds might be imported and purchased here, it is really an insult to one's reason to suppose that nests with fresh eggs in them could also be in the market. Therefore, I can only support the far more extended experience and elaborate tests of Dr. MacCarthy of Sydney, and affirm that I believe Mr. Charles Bailey to be upon occasion a true medium, with a very remarkable gift for apports.

It is only right to state that when I returned to London I took one of Bailey's Assyrian tablets to the British Museum, and that it was pronounced to be a forgery. Upon further inquiry it proved that these forgeries are made by certain Jews in a suburb of Bagdad—and, so far as is known, only there. Therefore the matter is not much farther advanced. To the transporting agency it is at least possible that the forgery, steeped in recent human magnetism, is more capable of being handled than the original taken from a mound. Bailey has produced at least a hundred of these things, and no Custom House officer has deposed how they could have entered the country. On the other hand, Bailey told me clearly that the tablets had been passed by the British Museum, so that I fear I cannot acquit him of tampering with truth—and just there lies the great difficulty of deciding upon his case. But one has always to remember that physical mediumship has no connexion one way or the other with personal character, any more than the gift of poetry.*

It is forgotten by those critics who are continually quoting Bailey's exposure,† that immediately before the Grenoble experience he had undergone a long series of tests at Milan, in the course of which the investigators took the extreme and unjustifiable course

* "The Wanderings of a Spiritualist," pp. 103-105.
† "Annals of Psychical Science, Vol. IX.

of watching the medium secretly when in his own bedroom. The committee, which consisted of nine business men and doctors, could find no flaw in seventeen sittings, even when the medium was put in a sack. These sittings lasted from February to April in 1904, and have been fully reported by Professor Marzorati. In view of their success, far too much has been made of the subsequent accusation in France. If the same analysis and scepticism were shown towards "exposures" as towards phenomena, public opinion would be more justly directed.

The phenomenon of apports seems so incomprehensible to our minds, that the author on one occasion asked a spirit control whether he could say anything which would throw a light upon it. The answer was: "It involves some factors which are beyond your human science and which could not be made clear to you. At the same time you may take as a rough analogy the case of water which is turned into steam. Then this steam, which is invisible, may be conducted elsewhere to be reassembled as visible water." This is, as stated, an analogy rather than an explanation, but it seems very apt none the less. It should be added, as mentioned in the quotation, that not only Mr. Stanford, of Melbourne, but also Dr. MacCarthy, one of the leading medical men of Sydney, carried out a long series of experiments with Bailey, and were convinced of his genuine powers.

The mediums quoted by no means exhaust the list of those with whom the author has had opportunities of experimenting, and he cannot leave the subject

without alluding to the ectoplasm of Eva, which he has held between his fingers, or the brilliant luminosities of Frau Silbert which he has seen shooting like a dazzling crown out of her head. Enough has been said, he hopes, to show that the succession of great mediums is not extinct for anyone who is earnest in his search, and also to assure the reader that these pages are written by one who has spared no pains to gain practical knowledge of that which he studies. As to the charge of credulity which is invariably directed by the unreceptive against anyone who forms a positive opinion upon this subject, the author can solemnly aver that in the course of his long career as an investigator he cannot recall one single case where it was clearly shown that he had been mistaken upon any serious point, or had given a certificate of honesty to a performance which was afterwards clearly proved to be dishonest. A man who is credulous does not take twenty years of reading and experiment before he comes to his fixed conclusions.

No account of physical mediumship would be complete which did not allude to the remarkable results obtained by "Margery," the name adopted for public purposes by Mrs. Crandon, the beautiful and gifted wife of one of the first surgeons in Boston. This lady showed psychic powers some years ago, and the author was instrumental in calling the attention of the *Scientific American* Committee to her case. By doing so he most unwillingly exposed her to much trouble and worry, which were borne with extraordinary patience by her husband and herself. It was

difficult to say which was the more annoying: Houdini the conjurer, with his preposterous and ignorant theories of fraud, or such "scientific" sitters as Professor McDougall, of Harvard, who, after fifty sittings and signing as many papers at the end of each sitting to endorse the wonders recorded, was still unable to give any definite judgment, and contented himself with vague innuendoes. The matter was not mended by the interposition of Mr. E. J. Dingwall of the London S.P.R., who proclaimed the truth of the mediumship in enthusiastic private letters, but denied his conviction at public meetings. These so-called "experts" came out of the matter with little credit, but more than two hundred common-sense sitters had wit enough and honesty enough to testify truly as to that which occurred before their eyes. The author may add that he has himself sat with Mrs. Crandon and has satisfied himself, so far as one sitting could do so, as to the truth and range of her powers.

The control in this instance professes to be Walter, the lady's dead brother, and he exhibits a very marked individuality with a strong sense of humour and considerable command of racy vernacular. The voice production is direct, in a male voice, which seems to operate some few inches in front of the medium's forehead. The powers have been progressive, their range continually widening, until now they have reached almost the full compass of mediumship. The ringing of electric bells without contact has been done *ad nauseam*, until one would imagine that no one, save a stone-deaf man or a scientific expert, could have any

doubt about it. Movement of objects at a distance, spirit lights, raising of tables, apports, and finally the clear production of ectoplasm in a good red light, have succeeded each other. The patient work of Dr. and Mrs. Crandon will surely be rewarded, and their names will live in the history of psychic science, and so in a very different category will those of their traducers.

Of all forms of mediumship the highest and most valuable, when it can be relied upon, is that which is called automatic writing, since in this, if the form be pure, we seem to have found a direct method of obtaining teaching from the Beyond. Unhappily, it is a method which lends itself very readily to self-deception, since it is certain that the subconscious mind of man has many powers with which we are as yet imperfectly acquainted. It is impossible ever to accept any automatic script whole-heartedly as a hundred per cent. statement of truth from the Beyond. The stained glass will still tint the light which passes through it, and our human organism will never be crystal clear. The verity of any particular specimen of such writing must depend not upon mere assertion, but upon corroborative details and the general dissimilarity from the mind of the writer, and similarity to that of the alleged inspirer. When, for example, in the case of the late Oscar Wilde, you get long communications which are not only characteristic of his style, but which contain constant allusions to obscure episodes in his own life and which finally are written in his own handwriting, it must be admitted that the evidence is overpoweringly strong. There is a great

outpouring of such scripts at present in all the English-speaking countries. They are good, bad, and indifferent, but the good contain much matter which bears every trace of inspiration. The Christian or the Jew may well ask himself why parts of the Old Testament should admittedly have been written in this fashion, and yet its modern examples be treated with contempt. "And there came a writing to him from Elijah the prophet, saying," etc. (2 Chronicles xxi. 12) is one of several allusions which show the ancient use of this particular form of spirit communion.

Of all the examples of recent years there is none which can compare in fullness and dignity with the writings of the Rev. George Vale Owen, whose great script, "The Life Beyond the Veil," may be as permanent an influence as that of Swedenborg. It is an interesting point, elaborated by Dr. A. J. Wood, that even in most subtle and complex points there is a close resemblance between the work of these two seers, and yet it is certain that Vale Owen is very slightly acquainted with the writings of the great Swedish teacher. George Vale Owen is so outstanding a figure in the history of modern Spiritualism that some short note upon him may not be out of place. He was born in Birmingham in 1869 and was educated at the Midland Institute and Queen's College, Birmingham. After curacies at Seaforth, Fairfield, and the low Scotland Road division of Liverpool, where he had a large experience among the poor, he became vicar of Orford, near Warrington, where his energy has been instrumental in erecting a new church. Here he

remained for twenty years working in his parish which deeply appreciated his ministrations. Some psychic manifestations came his way, and finally he found himself impelled to exercise his own latent power of inspired writing, the script purporting to come in the first instance from his mother, but being continued by certain high spirits or angels who had come in her train. The whole constitutes an account of life after death, and a body of philosophy and advice from unseen sources, which seems to the author to bear every internal sign of a high origin. The narrative is dignified and lofty, expressed in slightly archaic English which gives it a curious flavour of its own.

Some extracts from this script appeared in various papers, attracting the more notice as being from the pen of a vicar of the Established Church. The manuscript was finally brought to the notice of the late Lord Northcliffe, who was much impressed by it and also by the self-denial of the writer, who refused to take any remuneration for its publication. This followed weekly in Lord Northcliffe's Sunday paper, the *Weekly Dispatch*, and nothing has ever occurred which has brought the highest teachings of Spiritualism so directly to the masses. It was shown incidentally that the policy of the Press in the past had been not only ignorant and unjust, but actually mistaken from the low point of view of self-interest, for the circulation of the *Dispatch* increased greatly during the vear that it published the script. Such doings were, however, highly offensive to a very conservative bishop, and Mr. Vale Owen found himself, like all

religious reformers, an object of dislike, and suffered veiled persecution from his Church superiors. With this force pushing him, and the pull in front of the whole Spiritualist community, he bravely abandoned his living and cast himself and his family on the mercy of whatever Providence might please to direct, his brave wife entirely sympathizing with him in a step which was no light matter for a couple who were no longer young. After a short lecturing tour in America and another in England, Mr. Vale Owen is at present presiding over a Spiritualist congregation in London, where the magnetism of his presence draws considerable audiences. In an excellent pen-portrait, Mr. David Gow has said of Vale Owen:

> The tall, thin figure of the minister, his pale, ascetic face lit by large eyes, luminous with tenderness and humour, his modest bearing, his quiet words charged with the magnetism of sympathy, all these revealed in full measure what manner of man he is. They disclosed a soul of rare devotion kept sane and sweet by a kindly, humorous sense and a practical outlook on the world. He seemed to be charged more with the spirit of Erasmus or of Melanchthon than of the bluff Luther. Perhaps the Church needs no Luthers to-day.

If the author has included this short notice under the head of personal experience, it is because he has been honoured by the close friendship of Mr. Vale Owen for some years, and has been in a position to study and endorse the reality of his psychic powers.

The author would add that he has succeeded in getting the independent Direct Voice sitting alone

with his wife. The voice was a deep, male one, coming some feet above our heads, and uttering only a short but very audible greeting. It is hoped that with further development consistent results may be obtained. For years the author has, in his own domestic circle, obtained inspired messages through the hand and voice of his wife, which have been of the most lofty and often of the most evidential nature. These are, however, too personal and intimate to be discussed in a general survey of the subject.

CHAPTER XXIII

SPIRITUALISM AND THE WAR

MANY people had never heard of Spiritualism until the period that began in 1914, when into so many homes the Angel of Death entered suddenly. The opponents of Spiritualism have found it convenient to regard this world upheaval as being the chief cause of the widening interest in psychical research. It has been said, too, by these unscrupulous opponents that the author's advocacy of the subject, as well as that of his distinguished friend, Sir Oliver Lodge, was due to the fact that each of them had a son killed in the war, the inference being that grief had lessened their critical faculties and made them believe what in more normal times they would not have believed. The author has many times refuted this clumsy lie, and pointed out the fact that his investigation dates back as far as 1886. Sir Oliver Lodge, for his part, says :*

It must not be supposed that my outlook has changed appreciably since the event, and the particular experiences related in the foregoing pages; my conclusion has been gradually forming itself for years, though, undoubtedly, it is based on experience of the same sort of thing. But this event has strengthened and liberated my testimony.

* "Raymond," p. 374.

It can now be associated with a private experience of my own, instead of with the private experiences of others. So long as one was dependent on evidence connected, even indirectly connected, with the bereavement of others, one had to be reticent and cautious, and in some cases silent. Only by special permission could any portion of the facts be reproduced; and that permission might in important cases be withheld. My own deductions were the same then as they are now, but the facts are now my own.

While it is true that Spiritualism counted its believers in millions before the war, there is no doubt that the subject was not understood by the world at large, and hardly recognized as having an existence. The war changed all that. The deaths occurring in almost every family in the land brought a sudden and concentrated interest in the life after death. People not only asked the question, "If a man die shall he live again?" but they eagerly sought to know if communication was possible with the dear ones they had lost. They sought for "the touch of a vanished hand, and the sound of a voice that is still." Not only did thousands investigate for themselves, but, as in the early history of the movement, the first opening was often made by those who had passed on. The newspaper Press was not able to resist the pressure of public opinion, and much publicity was given to stories of soldiers' return, and generally to the life after death.

In this chapter only brief reference can be made to the different ways in which the spiritual world intermingled with the various phases of the war. The

conflict itself was predicted over and over again; dead soldiers showed themselves in their old homes, and also gave warnings of danger to their comrades on the battlefield; they impressed their images on the photographic plate; solitary figures and legendary hosts, not of this world, were seen in the war area; indeed, over the whole scene there was from time to time a strong atmosphere of other-world presence and activity.

If for a moment the author may strike a personal note he would say that, while his own loss had no effect upon his views, the sight of a world which was distraught with sorrow, and which was eagerly asking for help and knowledge, did certainly affect his mind and cause him to understand that these psychic studies, which he had so long pursued, were of immense practical importance and could no longer be regarded as a mere intellectual hobby or fascinating pursuit of a novel research. Evidence of the presence of the dead appeared in his own household, and the relief afforded by posthumous messages taught him how great a solace it would be to a tortured world if it could share in the knowledge which had become clear to himself. It was this realization which, from early in 1916, caused him and his wife to devote themselves largely to this subject, to lecture upon it in many countries, and to travel to Australia, New Zealand, America, and Canada upon missions of instruction. Indeed, this history of the subject may be said to derive from the same impulse which first caused him to throw himself wholeheartedly into the cause.

This work may well fill a very small space in any general history, but it becomes apposite in a chapter dealing with the war, since it was the atmosphere of war in which it was engendered and grew.

Prophecy is one of the spiritual gifts, and any clear proof of its existence points to psychic powers outside our usual knowledge. In the case of the war, many could, of course, by normal means and the use of their own reason, foresee that the situation in the world had become so top-heavy with militarism that equilibrium could not be sustained. But some of the prophecies appear to be so distinct and detailed that they are beyond the power of mere reason and foresight.*

The general fact of a great world catastrophe, and England's share in it, is thus spoken of in a spirit communication received by the Oxley Circle in Manchester and published in 1885 :†

For twice seven years—from the period already noted to you—the influences that are brought to bear against the British Nation will be successful; and *after that time* comes a fearful contest, a mighty struggle, a terrible bloodshed—according to human modes of expression, a dethronement of kings, an overthrow of Powers, great riot and disturbance; and still greater commotion amongst the masses concerning wealth and its possession. In using these words I speak according to human apprehension.

The most important question is—shall Britain for ever be lost ? We see the prophecies of many, and the attitude of many Representatives upon the outer plane, and we

* Reference to some of these will be found in the following publications · "Prophecies and Omens of the Great War," by Ralph Shirley, "The War and the Prophets," by Herbert Thurston, and "War Prophecies," by F C. S. Schiller (S P.R. *Journal*, June, 1916)

† "Angelic Revelations," Vol. V, pp 170-171.

see more clearly than many upon the Earth give us credit for, that amongst the latter-named there are those who are lovers of gold more than the interior principle which that gold represents.

Unless at the coming crisis the Great Power intervenes, that is, the Grand Operating Power of which I have spoken before, and in calm dignity flows forth and issues the mandate—Peace, be still!—the prophecy of some, that England shall sink in the depths for ever, will be fulfilled. Like the specific atoms of life who compose the State called England, who must sink for a time in order that they may rise again, even so must the Nation sink, and that to a great depth for a season; because she is immersed in the love of what is false, and has not yet acquired the intelligence that will act as a powerful lever to raise her up to her own dignity. Will she, like a drowning man going down for the third and last time, go down and be lost for ever? Once in the grand whole of the Mighty One, so she must continue an integral part. There is a kindly hand that will be stretched forth to save her, and bear her up from the billows of the self-hood that would otherwise engulf her. With an energy that is irrepressible, that power says—England once, England for ever! But not in the same state will that continuance be. She must and will sink the lower, in order that she may rise the higher. The how, why, and in what manner, and by what treatment we shall use to bring about her safety and serenity, I shall speak of further on; but, here I affirm, that in order to save her, England must be drained of her best blood.

For particulars of M. Sonrel's famous prophecy in 1868 of the war of 1870, and his less direct prophecy of that of 1914, readers are referred to Professor Richet's book, "Thirty Years of Psychical Research"

(pp. 387–9). The essential part of the latter prophecy is expressed as follows:—

> Wait now, wait . . . years pass. It is a vast war. What bloodshed! God! What bloodshed! Oh, France, oh, my country, thou art saved! Thou art on the Rhine!

The prophecy was uttered in 1868, but was not put on record by Dr. Tardieu until April, 1914.

The author has previously referred * to the prophecy given in Sydney, Australia, by the well-known medium, Mrs. Foster Turner, but it will bear repeating. At a Sunday meeting in February, 1914, at the Little Theatre, Castlereagh Street, before an audience of nearly a thousand people, in a trance-address in which Mr. W. T. Stead purported to be the influence, she said, as reported in notes taken on the occasion of her address :

> Now, although there is not at present a whisper of a great European War at hand, yet I want to warn you that before this year 1914 has run its course, Europe will be deluged in blood. Great Britain, our beloved nation, will be drawn into the most awful war the world has ever known. Germany will be the great antagonist, and will draw other nations in her train. Austria will totter to its ruin. Kings and kingdoms will fall. Millions of precious lives will be slaughtered, but Britain will finally triumph and emerge victorious.

The date of the ending of the Great War was given correctly in " Private Dowding," by W. T. P.

* " The Wanderings of a Spiritualist " (1921), p. 260.

(Major W. Tudor Pole), who calls his book " A Plain Record of the After-Death Experiences of a Soldier killed in Battle." In this book, which was first published in London in 1917, we find (p. 99) a communication which reads:

Messenger: In Europe there will be three great federations of states. These federations will come to birth naturally and without bloodshed, but Armageddon must first be fought out.

W. T. P.: How long will this take?

Messenger: I am not a very high being, and to me are not revealed details of all these wonderful happenings. So far as I am allowed to see, peace will be re-established during 1919, and world-federations will come into being during the following seven years. Although actual fighting may end in 1918, it will take many years to bring poise and peace into actual and permanent being.

In the list of prophecies, that of Mrs. Piper, the famous trance-medium of Boston, U.S.A., deserves a place, though it may be considered by some to have an element of vagueness. It occurred about 1898 at a sitting with Dr. Richard Hodgson, who was so prominently associated with the English and American Societies for Psychical Research.

Never since the days of Melchizedek has the earthly world been so susceptible to the influence of spirit. It will in the next century be astonishingly perceptible to the minds of men. I will also make a statement which you will surely see verified. Before the clear revelation of spirit communication, there will be a terrible war in different parts of the world. This will precede much clear communication. The entire world must be purified

and cleansed before mortal man can see, through his spiritual vision, his friends on this side, and it will take just this line of action to bring about a state of perfection. Friend, kindly think on this.*

Mr. J. G. Piddington, in the "Proceedings" of the Society for Psychical Research,† speaks at length of the war predictions contained in various automatic scripts, particularly in those of Mrs. Alfred Lyttelton. In his summing up he says :

The scripts in general terms predicted the War; so did many people. Some half-dozen scripts written between July 9 and 21, 1914, predicted that the War was close at hand; so also, and earlier, had Sir Cecil Spring-Rice. The scripts predict that the War will eventually lead to a great improvement in international relations and social conditions; so, too, tens of thousands of ordinary citizens throughout the British Empire believed or hoped that the Great War was, as the phrase went, "a war to end war."

But this last parallel between the predictions in the scripts and the beliefs or aspirations that declared themselves with such strange ubiquity and intensity when war broke out, is in truth only a superficial parallel; for whereas the wave of idealism that swept over the Empire followed, or at best synchronized with, the beginning of the War, for many years before August, 1914, the scripts had repeatedly combined predictions of a Utopia with predictions of war, and had combined them in such a manner as to imply that the one is to be the outcome of the other. I know of no parallel to that. The writers, the soldiers, the diplomatists, and the politicians who forewarned us of the War, preached its dangers and its horrors, but they

* Quoted in *Light*, 1914, p 349.
† S P R, Vol. XXXIII (March, 1923)

did not tell us that this perilous and horrible tragedy would yet prove to be the birth-throes of a happier world. Nor did the propagandists of Hague Conferences and other schemes for allaying international rivalries warn us that a world-war must precede the attainment of their desires. All alike predicted or feared a coming chaos ; the scripts alone, so far as I know, spoke a hope for the world in the coming wars, and hailed the approaching chaos as the prelude to a new kosmos.

The predictions of the War in the scripts cannot be separated from the predictions of an eventual Utopia. The scripts do not say, " There will be a war," stop there, and then start afresh and say, " There will be a Utopia." They clearly imply that the Utopia will result from the War. Yet it cannot be said that the two component parts of the whole prophecy stand or fall together, because the predictions of war have been fulfilled; but the fulfilment or the failure of the Utopian predictions must eventually influence opinion as to the *source* of the war predictions. Should the Utopia foreshadowed in the scripts be translated into fact, it would be very difficult to attribute the prediction of it as an outcome of the War to ordinary human prescience, and a strong case would arise for admitting the claim made in the scripts, and for giving the credit of the prediction to discarnate beings. And if the Utopian predictions were held to be the work of discarnate minds, in all probability the predictions of the War, which are so closely bound up with them, would be assigned to the same source.

There are very many other prophecies which have been more or less successful. A perusal of them, however, cannot fail to impress the student with the conviction that the sense of time is the least accurate of spiritual details. Very often where the facts are right the dates are hopelessly at fault.

The most exact of all the prophecies concerning the War seems to have been that of Sophie, a Greek young woman who, having been hypnotized by Dr. Antoniou of Athens, delivered her oracles vocally in a state of trance. The date was June 6, 1914. She not only predicted the Great War and who the parties would be, but gave a great deal of detail such as the neutrality of Italy at the beginning, her subsequent alliance with the Entente, the action of Greece, the place of the final battle on the Vardar, and so forth. It is interesting, however, to note that she made certain errors which tend to show that the position of the Fatalist is not secure, and that there is at least a broad margin which can be affected by human will and energy.*

There is much testimony regarding the occurrence of what may be called spirit intervention during the war. Captain W. E. Newcome has related the following :†

> It was in September, 1916, that the 2nd Suffolks left Loos to go up into the northern sector of Albert. I accompanied them, and whilst in the front line trenches of that sector I, with others, witnessed one of the most remarkable occurrences of the war.
>
> About the end of October, up to November 5th, we were actually holding that part of the line with very few troops. On November 1st the Germans made a very determined attack, doing their utmost to break through. I had occasion to go down to the reserve line, and during my absence the German attack began.

* *Revue Métapsychique*, December, 1925, pp 380, 390.
† *Pearson's Magazine*, August, 1919, pp. 190–91.

I hurried back to my company with all speed, and arrived in time to give a helping hand in throwing the enemy back to his own line. He never gained a footing in our trenches. The assault was sharp and short, and we had settled down to watch and wait again for his next attack.

We had not long to wait, for we soon saw Germans again coming over No Man's Land in massed waves ; but before they reached our wire a white, spiritual figure of a soldier rose from a shell-hole, or out of the ground about one hundred yards on our left, just in front of our wire and between the first line of Germans and ourselves. The spectral figure then slowly walked along our front for a distance of about one thousand yards. Its outline suggested to my mind that of an old pre-war officer, for it appeared to be in a shell coat, with field-service cap on its head. It looked, first, across at the oncoming Germans, then turned its head away and commenced to walk slowly outside our wire along the sector that we were holding.

Our S O S signal had been answered by our artillery. Shells and bullets were whistling across No Man's Land, . . . but none in any way impeded the spectre's progress. It steadily marched from the left of us till it got to the extreme right of the sector, then it turned its face right full on to us. It seemed to look up and down our trench, and as each Véry light rose it stood out more prominently.

After a brief survey of us it turned sharply to the right and made a bee-line for the German trenches. The Germans scattered back . . . and no more was seen of them that night.

The Angels of Mons seemed to be the first thought of the men ; then some said it looked like Lord Kitchener, and others said its face, when turned full on to us, was not unlike Lord Roberts. I know that it gave me personally

a great shock, and for some time it was the talk of the company.

Its appearance can be vouched for by sergeants and men of my section.

In the same article in *Pearson's Magazine* the story is told of Mr. William M. Speight, who had lost a brother officer, and his best friend, in the Ypres salient in December, 1915, seeing this officer come to his dug-out the same night. The next evening Mr. Speight invited another officer to come to the dug-out in order to confirm him should the vision reappear. The dead officer came once more and, after pointing to a spot on the floor of the dug-out, vanished. A hole was dug at the indicated spot, and at a depth of three feet there was discovered a narrow tunnel excavated by the Germans, with fuses and mines timed to explode thirteen hours later. By the discovery of this mine the lives of a number of men were saved.

Mrs. E. A. Cannock, a well-known London clairvoyant, described * at a Spiritualist meeting how a number of deceased soldiers adopted a novel and convincing method of making known their identity. The soldiers (as seen in her clairvoyant vision) advanced in single file up the aisle, led by a young lieutenant. Each man bore on his chest what appeared to be a large placard on which was written his name and the place where he had lived on earth. Mrs. Cannock was able to read these names and descriptions, and they were all identified by various members of the audience. A

* *Light*, 1919, p. 215.

curious feature was that as each name was recognized the spirit form faded away, thus making way for the one who was following.

As a type of other reports of a similar nature we may quote a case of what is described as "Telepathy from the Battle-front." On November 4, 1914, Mrs. Fussey, of Wimbledon, whose son "Tab" was serving in France with the 9th Lancers, was sitting at home when she felt in her arm the sharp sting of a wound. She jumped up and cried out, "How it smarts!" and rubbed the place. Her husband also attended to her arm, but could find no trace of anything wrong with it. Mrs. Fussey continued to suffer pain and exclaimed: "Tab is wounded in the arm. I know it." The following Monday a letter arrived from Private Fussey, saying that he had been shot in the arm and was in hospital.* The case coincides with the recorded experiences of many psychics who by some unknown law of sympathy have suffered shocks simultaneously with accidents occurring to friends, and sometimes strangers, at a distance.

In a number of cases dead soldiers have manifested themselves through psychic photography. One of the most remarkable instances occurred in London on Armistice Day, November 11, 1922, when the medium, Mrs. Deane, in the presence of Miss Estelle Stead, took a photograph of the crowd in Whitehall, in the neighbourhood of the Cenotaph. It was during the Two Minutes Silence, and on the photograph there is to be seen a broad circle of light, in the midst

* *Light*, 1914, p. 595

of which are two or three dozen heads, many of them those of soldiers, who were subsequently recognized. These photographs have been repeated on each succeeding year, and though the usual reckless and malicious attacks have been made upon the medium and her work, those who had the best opportunity of checking it have no doubt of the supernormal character of these pictures.

We must content ourselves with one more case as typical of many hundreds of results. Mr. R. S. Hipwood, 174, Cleveland Road, Sunderland, writes :*

We lost our only son in France, August 27, 1918. Being a good amateur photographer I was curious about the photos that had been taken by the Crewe Circle. We took our own plate with us, and I put the plate in the dark slide myself and put my name on it. We exposed two plates in the camera and got a well-recognized photo. Even my nine-year-old grandson could tell who the extra was, without anyone saying anything to him. Having a thorough knowledge of photography, I can vouch for the veracity of the photograph in every particular. I claim the print which I send you to be an ordinary photograph of myself and Mrs. Hipwood, with the extra of my son, R. W. Hipwood, 13th Welsh Regiment, killed in France in the great advance in August, 1918. I tender to our friends at Crewe our unbounded confidence in their work.

Of the many cases recorded of the return of dead soldiers, the following stands out because the particulars were received from two independent sources. It

* "The Case for Spirit Photography," by Sir A. Conan Doyle, p. 108.

is related* by Mr. W. T. Waters, of Tunbridge Wells, who says that he is only a novice in the study of Spiritualism :

In July last I had a sitting with Mr. J. J. Vango, in the course of which the control suddenly told me that there was standing by me a young soldier who was most anxious that I should take a message to his mother and sister who live in this town. I replied that I did not know any soldier near to me who had passed over. However, the lad would not be put off, and as my own friends seemed to stand aside to enable him to speak, I promised to endeavour to carry out his wishes.

At once came an exact description which enabled me instantly to recognize in this soldier lad the son of an acquaintance of my family. He told me certain things by which I was made doubly certain that it was he and no other, and he then gave me his message of comfort and assurance to his mother and sister (his father had died when he was a baby), who, for over two years, had been uncertain as to his fate, as he had been posted as " missing." He described how he had been badly wounded and captured by the Germans in a retreat, and that he had died about a week afterwards, and he implored me to tell his dear ones that he was often with them, and that the only bar to his complete happiness was the witnessing of his mother's great grief and his inability to make himself known.

I fully intended to keep my promise, but knowing that the lad's people favoured the High Church party and would most likely be absolutely sceptical, I was puzzled how to convey the message, as I felt they would only think that my own loss had affected my brain. I ventured to approach his aunt, but what I told her only called forth

* *Light* (December 20, 1919), p. 407

the remark : "It cannot be," and I therefore decided to await an opportunity of speaking to his mother direct.

Before this looked-for opportunity came, a young lady of this town, having lost her mother about two years ago, and hearing from my daughter that I was investigating these matters, called to see me, and I lent her my books. One of these books is "Rupert Lives," with which she was particularly struck, and she eventually arranged a sitting with Miss McCreadie, through whom she received such convincing testimony that she is now a firm believer. During this sitting, the soldier boy who came to me came to her also. He repeated the same description that I had received, mentioned in addition his name—Charlie—and begged her to give a message to his mother and sister —the selfsame message which I had failed to give. So anxious was he in the matter, that at the close of the sitting he came again and implored her not to fail him.

Now, these events happened at different dates—July and September—the same message exactly being given through different mediums to different persons, and yet people tell us it is all a myth and that mediums simply read our thoughts.

When my friend told me of her experience I at once asked her to go with me to the lad's mother, and I am pleased to state that this double message convinced both his mother and his sister, and that his aunt is almost brought to the truth if not quite.

Sir William Barrett * records this evidential communication which was obtained in Dublin through the ouija board, with Mrs. Travers Smith, the daughter of the late Professor Edward Dowden. Her friend, Miss C., who is mentioned, was the daughter of a medical

* "On The Threshold of the Unseen," p. 184

man. Sir William calls it "The Pearl Tie-pin Case."

Miss C., the sitter, had a cousin an officer with our Army in France, who was killed in battle a month previously to the sitting: this she knew. One day after the name of her cousin had unexpectedly been spelt out on the ouija board, and her name given in answer to her query: "Do you know who I am?" the following message came:

"Tell mother to give my *pearl tie-pin* to the girl I was going to marry. I think she ought to have it." When asked what was the name and address of the lady both were given; the name spelt out included the full Christian and surname, the latter being a very unusual one and *quite unknown to both the sitters.* The address given in London was either fictitious or taken down incorrectly, as a letter sent there was returned and the whole message was thought to be fictitious.

Six months later, however, it was discovered that the officer *had* been engaged, shortly before he left for the Front, to the very lady whose name was given; he had, however, told no one. Neither his cousin nor any of his own family in Ireland were aware of the fact, and had never seen the lady nor heard her name until the War Office sent over the deceased officer's effects. Then they found that he had put this lady's name in his will as his next-of-kin, both Christian and surname being precisely the same as given through the automatist; and what is equally remarkable, a *pearl tie-pin* was found in his effects.

Both the ladies have signed a document they sent me, affirming the accuracy of the above statement. The message was recorded at the time, and *not* written from memory after verification had been obtained. Here there could be no explanation of the facts by subliminal memory, or telepathy or collusion, and the evidence points un-

mistakably to a telepathic message from the deceased officer.

The Rev. G. Vale Owen describes * the return of George Leaf, one of his Bible Class lads in Orford, Warrington, who joined the R.F.A. and was killed in the Great War.

Some weeks later his mother was tidying up the hearth in the sitting-room. She was on her knees before the grate when she felt an impulse to turn round and look at the door which opened into the entrance hall. She did so, and saw her son clad in his working clothes, just as he used to come home every evening when he was alive. He took off his coat and hung it upon the door, an old familiar habit of his. Then he turned to her, nodded and smiled, and walked through to the back kitchen where he had been in the habit of washing before sitting down to his evening meal. It was all quite natural and lifelike. She knew that it was her dead boy who had come to show her that he was alive in the spirit land and living a natural life, well, happy and content. Also that smile of love told her that his heart was still with the old folks at home. She is a sensible woman and I did not doubt her story for a moment. As a matter of fact, since his death he had been seen in Orford Church, which he used to attend, and has been seen in various places since.

There are many instances of visions of soldiers coinciding with death. In Rosa Stuart's "Dreams and Visions of the War" this case is given :

A very touching story was told me by a Bournemouth wife. Her husband, a sergeant in the Devons, went to France on July 25th, 1915. She had received letters

* "Facts and the Future Life" (1922), pp. 53–54.

regularly from him, all of which were very happy and cheerful, and so she began to be quite reassured in her mind about him, feeling certain that whatsoever danger he had to face he would come safely through.

On the evening of September 25th, 1915, at about ten o'clock, she was sitting on her bed in her room talking to another girl, who was sharing it with her. The light was full on, and neither of them had as yet thought of getting into bed, so deep were they in their chat about the events of the day and the war.

And then suddenly there came a silence. The wife had broken off sharply in the middle of a sentence and sat there staring into space.

For, standing there before her in uniform, was her husband! For two or three minutes she remained there looking at him, and she was struck by the expression of sadness in his eyes. Getting up quickly she advanced to the spot where he was standing, but by the time she had reached it the vision had disappeared.

Though only that morning the wife had had a letter saying her husband was safe and well, she felt sure that the vision foreboded evil. She was right. Soon afterwards she received a letter from the War Office, saying that he had been killed in the Battle of Loos on September 25th, 1915, the very date she had seemed to see him stand beside her bed.

A deeper mystical side of the visions of the Great War centres round the "Angels of Mons." Mr. Arthur Machen, the well-known London journalist, wrote a story telling how English bowmen from the field of Agincourt intervened during the terrible retreat from Mons. But he stated afterwards that he had invented the incident. But here, as so often before, truth proved fiction to be a fact, or at least

facts of a like character were reported by a number of credible witnesses. Mr. Harold Begbie published a little book, "On the Side of the Angels," giving much evidence, and Mr. Ralph Shirley, editor of the *Occult Review* (London), followed with "The Angel Warriors at Mons," in which he added to Mr. Begbie's testimony.

A British officer, replying to Mr. Machen in the London *Evening News* (September 14, 1915), mentions that he was fighting at Le Cateau on August 26, 1914, and that his division retired and marched throughout the night of the 26th and during the 27th. He says :

On the night of the 27th I was riding along in the column with two other officers. We had been talking and doing our best to keep from falling asleep on our horses.

As we rode along I became conscious of the fact that, in the fields on both sides of the road along which we were marching, I could see a very large body of horsemen. These horsemen had the appearance of squadrons of cavalry, and they seemed to be riding across the fields and going in the same direction as we were going, and keeping level with us.

The night was not very dark, and I fancied that I could see the squadron of these cavalrymen quite distinctly.

I did not say a word about it at first, but I watched them for about twenty minutes. The other two officers had stopped talking.

At last one of them asked me if I saw anything in the fields. I then told him what I had seen. The third officer then confessed that he, too, had been watching these horsemen for the past twenty minutes.

So convinced were we that they were really cavalry

that, at the next halt, one of the officers took a party of men out to reconnoitre, and found no one there. The night then grew darker, and we saw no more.

The same phenomenon was seen by many men in our column. Of course, we were all dog-tired and over-taxed, but it is an extraordinary thing that the same phenomenon should be witnessed by so many people.

I myself am absolutely convinced that I saw these horsemen; and I feel sure that they did not exist only in my imagination. I do not attempt to explain the mystery —I only state facts.

This evidence sounds good, and yet it must be admitted that in the stress and tension of the great retreat men's minds were not in the best condition to weigh evidence. On the other hand, it is at such times of hardship that the psychic powers of man are usually most alive.

A profound aspect of the World War is involved in the consideration that the war on earth is but one aspect of unseen battles on higher planes where the powers of Good and Evil are engaged. The late Mr. A. P. Sinnett, a prominent Theosophist, deals with this question in an article entitled "Super-Physical Aspects of the War." * We cannot enter into the subject here, except to say that there are evidences from many sources to indicate that what Mr. Sinnett speaks of has a basis of fact.

A considerable number of books, and a very much larger number of manuscripts, record the alleged experiences of those who passed over in the war, which differ, of course, in no way from those who pass over

* *The Occult Review*, December 1914, p. 346.

at any other time, but are rendered more dramatic by the historical occasion. The greatest of these books is " Raymond." Sir Oliver Lodge is so famous a scientist and so profound a thinker that his brave and frank avowal produced a great impression upon the public. The book appeared later in a condensed form, and it is likely to remain for many years a classic of the subject. Other books of the same class, all of them corroborative in their main details, are " The Case of Lester Coltman," " Claude's Book," " Rupert Lives," " Grenadier Rolf," " Private Dowding," and others. All of them depict the sort of after-life existence which is described in a subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER XXIV

THE RELIGIOUS ASPECT OF SPIRITUALISM

SPIRITUALISM is a system of thought and knowledge which can be reconciled with any religion. The basic facts are the continuity of personality and the power of communication after death. These two basic facts are of as great importance to a Brahmin, a Mohammedan, or a Parsee as to a Christian. Therefore Spiritualism makes a universal appeal. There is only one school of thought to which it is absolutely irreconcilable: that is the school of materialism, which holds the world in its grip at present and is the root cause of all our misfortunes. Therefore the comprehension and acceptance of Spiritualism are essential things for the salvation of mankind, which is otherwise destined to descend lower and lower into a purely utilitarian and selfish view of the universe. The typical materialistic state was pre-war Germany, but every other modern state is of the same type if not of the same degree.

It may be asked, why should not the old religions be strong enough to rescue the world from its spiritual degradation? The answer is that they have all been tried and all have failed. The Churches which represent them have themselves become to the last degree formal and worldly and material. They have lost all

contact with the living facts of the spirit, and are content to refer everything back to ancient days, and to pay a lip service and an external reverence to an outworn system which has been so tangled up with incredible theologies that the honest mind is nauseated at the thought of it. No class has shown itself so sceptical and incredulous of modern Spiritual manifestations as those very clergy who profess complete belief in similar occurrences in bygone ages, and their utter refusal to accept them now is a measure of the sincerity of their professions. Faith has been abused until it has become impossible to many earnest minds, and there is a call for proof and for knowledge. It is this which Spiritualism supplies. It founds our belief in life after death and in the existence of invisible worlds, not upon ancient tradition or upon vague intuitions, but upon proven facts, so that a science of religion may be built up, and man given a sure pathway amid the quagmire of the creeds.

When one asserts that Spiritualism may be reconciled with any religion, one does not mean that all religions are of the same value, or that the teaching of Spiritualism alone may not be better than Spiritualism mixed with any other creed. Personally, the author thinks that Spiritualism alone supplies all that man needs, but he has found many men of high soul who have been unable to cast off the convictions of a lifetime, and yet have been able to accept the new truth without discarding the old belief. But if a man had Spiritualism alone as his guide, he would not find himself in a position which was opposed to essential

Christianity, but rather in one which was explanatory. Both systems preach life after death. Both recognize that the after-life is influenced in its progress and happiness by conduct here. Both profess to believe in the existence of a world of spirits, good and evil, whom the Christian calls angels and devils, and the Spiritualist guides, controls, and undeveloped spirits. Both believe in the main that the same virtues, unselfishness, kindness, purity, and honesty, are necessary for a high character. Bigotry, however, is looked upon as a serious offence by Spiritualists, while it is commended by most Christian sects. To Spiritualists every path upwards is commendable, and they fully recognize that in all creeds there are sainted, highly developed souls who have received by intuition all that the Spiritualist can give by special knowledge. The mission of the Spiritualist does not lie with these. His mission lies with those who openly declare themselves to be agnostic, or those more dangerous ones who profess some form of creed and yet are either thoughtless or agnostic at heart.

From the author's point of view the man who has received the full benefit of the new revelation is the man who has earnestly tried the gamut of the creeds and has found them all equally wanting. He then finds himself in a valley of gloom with Death waiting at the end, and nothing but plain, obvious duty as his acting religion. Such a condition produces many fine men of the Stoic breed, but it is not conducive to personal happiness. Then comes the positive proof of independent existence, sometimes suddenly, some-

times by slow conviction. The cloud has gone from the end of his prospect. He is no longer in a valley but upon the ridge beyond, with a vista of successive ridges each more beautiful than the last in front of him. All is brightness where once gloom girt him round. The day of this revelation has become the crowning day of his life.

Looking up at the lofty hierarchy of spiritual beings above him, the Spiritualist realizes that one or another great archangel may from time to time visit mankind with some mission of teaching and hope. Even humble Katie King, with her message of immortality given to a great scientist, was an angel from on high. Francis d'Assisi, Joan of Arc, Luther, Mahomet, Bab-ed-Din, and every real religious leader of history are among these evangels. But above all, according to our Western judgment, was Jesus the son of a Jewish artisan, Whom we call "The Christ." It is not for our mosquito brains to say what degree of divinity was in Him, but we can truly say that He was certainly nearer the Divine than we are, and that His teaching, upon which the world has not yet acted, is the most unselfish, merciful, and beautiful of which we have any cognizance, unless it be that of his fellow saint Buddha, who also was a messenger from God, but whose creed was rather for the Oriental than for the European mind.

When, however, we hark back to the message of our inspired Teacher, we find that there is little relation between His precepts and the dogmas or actions of His present-day disciples. We see also that a great deal

of what He taught has obviously been lost, and that to find this lost portion, which was unexpressed in the Gospels, we have to examine the practice of the early Church who were guided by those who had been in immediate touch with Him. Such an examination shows that all which we call Modern Spiritualism seems to have been familiar to the Christ circle, that the gifts of the spirit extolled by St. Paul are exactly those gifts which our mediums exhibit, and that those wonders which brought a conviction of other-world reality to the folk of those days can now be exhibited and should have a similar effect now, when men once again ask for assurance upon this vital matter. This subject is treated at large in other books, and can here be simply summed up by saying that, far from having wandered from orthodoxy, there is good reason to believe that the humble, undogmatic Spiritualist, with his direct spirit message, his communion of saints, and his association with that high teaching which has been called the Holy Ghost, is nearer to primitive Christianity than any other existing sect.

It is quite amazing when we read the early documents of the Church, and especially the writings of the so-called "Fathers," to find out the psychic knowledge and the psychic practice which were in vogue in those days. The early Christians lived in close and familiar touch with the unseen, and their absolute faith and constancy were founded upon the positive personal knowledge which each of them had acquired. They were aware, not as a speculation but as an absolute fact, that death meant no more than a translation to a wider

life, and might more properly be called birth. Therefore they feared it not at all, and regarded it rather as Dr. Hodgson did when he cried, " Oh, I can hardly bear to wait ! " Such an attitude did not affect their industry and value in this world, which have been attested even by their enemies. If converts in far-off lands have in these days been shown to deteriorate when they become Christians, it is because the Christianity which they have embraced has lost all the direct compelling power which existed of old.

Apart from the early Fathers, we have evidence of early Christian sentiment in the inscriptions of the Catacombs. An interesting book on early Christian remains in Rome, by the Rev. Spence Jones, Dean of Gloucester, deals in part with these strange and pathetic records. These inscriptions have the advantage over all our documentary evidence that they have certainly not been forged, and that there has been no possibility of interpolation. Dr. Jones, after having read many hundreds of them, says: " The early Christians speak of the dead as though they were still living. They talk to their dead." That is the point of view of the present-day Spiritualists—one which the Churches have so long lost. The early Christian graves present a strange contrast to those of the heathen which surround them. The latter always refer to death as a final, terrible and irrevocable thing. " Fuisti Vale " sums up their sentiment. The Christians, on the other hand, dwelt always upon the happy continuance of life. "Agape, thou shalt live for ever," " Victorina is in peace and in Christ," " May God

refresh thy spirit," " Mayest thou live in God." These inscriptions alone are enough to show that a new and infinitely consoling view of death had come to the human race.

The Catacombs, also, it may be remarked, are a proof of the simplicity of early Christianity before it became barnacled over with all sorts of complex definitions and abstractions, which sprang from the Grecian or Byzantine mind, and have caused infinite evil in the world. The one symbol which predominates in the Catacombs is that of the Good Shepherd—the tender idea of a man carrying a poor helpless lamb. One may search the Catacombs of the first centuries, and in all those thousands of devices you will find nothing of a blood sacrifice, nothing of a virgin birth. You will find the Kind Shepherd, the anchor of hope, the palm of the martyr, and the fish which was the pun or rebus upon the name of Jesus. Everything points to a simple religion. Christianity was at its best when it was in the hands of the humblest. It was the *rich, the powerful, and the learned who degraded*, complicated, and ruined it.

It is not possible, however, to draw any psychic inferences from the inscriptions or drawings in the Catacombs. For these we must turn to the pre-Nicene Fathers, and there we find so many references that a small book which would contain nothing else might easily be compiled. We have, however, to tune-in our thoughts and phrases to theirs in order to get the full meaning. Prophecy, for example, we now call mediumship, and an Angel has become a high

spirit or a Guide. Let us take a few typical quotations at random.

Saint Augustine, in his "*De curâ pro Mortuis*," says: "The spirits of the dead can be sent to the living and can unveil to them the future which they themselves have learned either from other spirits or from angels" (i.e. spiritual guides) "or by divine revelation." This is pure Spiritualism exactly as we know and define it. Augustine would not have spoken so surely of it and with such an accuracy of definition if he had not been quite familiar with it. There is no hint of its being illicit.

He comes back to the subject in his "The City of God," where he refers to practices which enable the ethereal body of a person to communicate with the spirits and higher guides and to receive visions. These persons were, of course, mediums—the name simply meaning the intermediate between the carnate and discarnate organism.

Saint Clement of Alexandria makes similar allusions, and so does Saint Jerome in his controversy with Vigilantius the Gaul. This, however, is, of course, at a later date—after the Council of Nicæa.

Hermas, a somewhat shadowy person, who was said to have been a friend of St. Paul's, and to have been the direct disciple of the Apostles, is credited with being the author of a book "The Pastor." Whether this authorship is apocryphal or not, the book is certainly written by someone in the early centuries of Christianity, and it therefore represents the ideas which then prevailed. He says: "The spirit does not

answer all who question nor any particular person, for the spirit that comes from God does not speak to man when man wills but when God permits. Therefore, when a man who has a spirit from God " (i.e. a control) " comes into an assembly of the faithful, and when prayer has been offered, the spirit fills this man who speaks as God wills."

This exactly describes our own psychic experience, when séances are properly conducted. We do not invoke spirits, as ignorant critics continually assert, and we do not know what is coming. But we pray—using the " Our Father," as a rule—and we await events. Then such spirit as is chosen and permitted comes to us and speaks or writes through the medium. Hermas, like Augustine, would not have spoken so accurately had he not had personal experience of the procedure.

Origen has many allusions to psychic knowledge. It is curious to compare the crass ignorance of our present spiritual chiefs with the wisdom of the ancients. Very many quotations could be given, but a short one may be taken from his controversy with Celsus.

Many people have embraced the Christian faith in spite of themselves, their hearts having been suddenly changed by some spirit, either in an apparition or in a dream.

In exactly this way leaders among the materialists, from Dr. Elliotson onwards, have been brought back to a belief in the life to come and its relation to this life by the study of psychic evidence.

It is the earlier Fathers who are the most definite

upon this matter, for they were nearer to the great psychic source. Thus Irenæus and Tertullian, who lived about the end of the second century, are full of allusions to psychic signs, while Eusebius, writing later, mourns their scarcity and complains that the Church had become unworthy of them.

Irenæus wrote: "We hear of many brethren in the Church possessing prophetic" (i.e. mediumistic) "gifts, and speaking through the spirit in all kinds of tongues and bringing to light for the general advantage the hidden things of men, and setting forth the mysteries of God." No passage could better describe the functions of a high-class medium.

When Tertullian had his great controversy with Marcion, he made the Spiritualistic gifts the test of truth between the two parties. He claimed that these were forthcoming in greater profusion upon his own side, and includes among them trance-utterance, prophecy, and revelation of secret things. Thus the things, which are now sneered at or condemned by so many clergymen, were in the year 200 the actual touchstones of Christianity. Tertullian also in his "*De Anima*" says: "We have to-day among us a sister who has received gifts on the nature of revelations which she undergoes in spirit in the church amid the rites of the Lord's Day, falling into ecstasy. She converses with angels"—that is, high spirits—"sees and hears mysteries, and reads the hearts of certain people and brings healings to those who ask. 'Among other things,' she said, 'a soul was shown to me in bodily form, and it seemed to be a spirit, but not empty nor

a thing of vacuity. On the contrary, it seemed as if it might be touched, soft, lucid, of the colour of air, and of the human form in every detail.' "

One mine of information as to the views of the primitive Christians is to be found in the "Apostolic Constitutions." It is true that they are not Apostolic, but Whiston, Krabbe and Bunsen are all agreed that at least seven out of the eight books are genuine ante-Nicene documents, probably of the early third century. A study of them reveals some curious facts. Incense and burning lamps were used at their services, so far justifying present-day Catholic practices. On the other hand, bishops and priests were married men. There was an elaborate system of boycott for anyone who transgressed the Church rules. If any clergyman bought a living he was cut off, and so was any man who obtained his ecclesiastical post by worldly patronage. There is no question of a supreme Bishop or Pope. Vegetarianism and total abstinence from wine were both forbidden and punished. This latter amazing law was probably a reaction against some heresy which enjoined both. A clergyman caught in a tavern was suspended. The clergy must eat bloodless meat after the modern Jewish fashion. Fasting was frequent and rigorous—one day a week (Thursday, apparently) and forty days at Lent.

It is, however, in discussing the " gifts," or varied forms of mediumship, that these ancient documents throw a light upon psychic subjects. Then, as now, mediumship took different forms, the gift of tongues, of healing, of prophecy and the like. Harnack says

that in each early Christian Church there were three discreet women, one for healing and two for prophecy. The whole subject is freely discussed in the "Constitutions." It appears that those who had gifts became conceited over them, and they are earnestly adjured to remember that a man may have gifts and yet have no great virtue, so that he is really the spiritual inferior of many who have no gifts.

The object of phenomena is shown, as in Modern Spiritualism, to be the conversion of the unbeliever, rather than the entertainment of the orthodox. They are " not for the advantage of those who perform them, but for the conviction of the unbelievers, that those whom the word did not persuade the power of signs might put to shame, for signs are not for us who believe, but for the unbelievers, both Jews and Gentiles " (" Constitutions," Book VIII, Sec. I).

Later the various gifts, which roughly correspond with our different forms of mediumship, are given as follows. " Let not therefore anyone that works signs and wonders judge anyone of the faithful who is not vouchsafed the same. For the gifts of God which are bestowed through Christ are various, and one man receives one gift and another another. For perhaps one has the word of wisdom " (trance-speaking), " and another the word of knowledge " (inspiration), " another discerning of spirits " (clairvoyance), " another foreknowledge of things to come, another the word of teaching " (spirit addresses), " another long-suffering,"—all our mediums need that gift.

One may well ask oneself where, outside the ranks of the Spiritualists, are these gifts or these observances to be found in any of those Churches which profess to be the branches of this early root ?

The high spiritual presences are continually recognized. Thus in the " Ordination of the Bishops " we find, " The Holy Ghost being also present, as well as all the holy and ministering spirits." On the whole, however, I should judge that we have now a far fuller grasp of psychic facts than the authors of the " Constitutions," and that these documents probably represent a declension from that intimate "Communion of Saints" which existed in the first century. There is reason to believe that psychic power is not a fixed thing, but that it comes in waves, which ebb and flow. At present we are on a rising tide, but we have no assurance that it will last.

It may reasonably be said that, since our knowledge of the events connected with early Church history is very limited, it should be possible to get into touch with some high Intelligence who took part in those events and so supplement our scanty sources of information. This has actually been done in several inspired scripts, and even as the proofs of this book were being corrected there has been an interesting development which must make it clear to all the world how close may be the connexion between other-world communication and religion. Two long scripts have recently appeared which have been written by the hand of the semi-conscious medium, Miss Cummins, the writing coming through at the

extraordinary pace of 2,000 words per hour. The first purports to be an account of Christ's mission from Philip the Evangelist, and the second is a supplement to the Acts of the Apostles, which claims to be from Cleophas, who supped with the risen Christ at Emmaus. The first of these has now been published,* and the second will soon be available for the public.

So far as the author is aware, no critical examination has been made of the Philip script, but a careful reading of it has convinced him that in dignity and power it is worthy to be that which it claims, and that it explains in a clear, adequate way many points which have puzzled the commentators. The case of the Cleophas script is, however, still more remarkable, and the author is inclined to accept this as the highest intellectual document, and the one with the most evident signs of supernormal origin, in the whole history of the movement. It has been submitted to Dr. Oesterley, Examining Chaplain of the Bishop of London, who is one of the foremost authorities upon Church history and tradition. He has declared that it bears every sign of being from the hand of one who lived in those days, and who was intimately connected with the Apostolic circle. Very many fine points of scholarship are noticed, such as the use of the Hebrew Hanan as the name of the High Priest, whereas he is only known to English-speaking readers by the Greek equivalent Annas. This is one of a great number of corroborations quite beyond

* "The Gospel of Philip the Evangelist."

the possible powers of any forger. Among other interesting points, Cleophas describes the Pentecost meeting, and declares that the Apostles sat round in a circle, with hands clasped, as the Master had taught them. It would, indeed, be a wonderful thing if the true inner meaning of Christianity, so long lost, should now be uncovered once more by the ridiculed and persecuted cult whose history is here recorded.

These two scripts represent, in the opinion of the author, two of the most cogent proofs of spirit communication which have ever been afforded upon the mental side. It would seem to be impossible to explain them away.

The Spiritualists, both of Great Britain and of other countries, may be divided into those who still remain in their respective Churches, and those who have formed a Church of their own. The latter have in Great Britain some four hundred meeting-places under the general direction of the Spiritualists' National Union. There is great elasticity of dogma, and while most of the Churches are Unitarian, an important minority are on Christian lines. They may be said to be roughly united upon seven central principles. These are :

1. The Fatherhood of God.
2. The Brotherhood of Man.
3. The Communion of Saints and Ministry of Angels.
4. Human survival of physical death.
5. Personal Responsibility.

6. Compensation or retribution for good or evil deeds.
7. Eternal progress open to every soul.

It will be seen that all of these are compatible with ordinary Christianity, with the exception perhaps of the fifth. The Spiritualists look upon Christ's earth life and death as an example rather than a redemption. Every man answers for his own sins, and none can shuffle out of that atonement by an appeal to some vicarious sacrifice. It is not possible for the tyrant or the debauchee, by some spiritual trick of so-called repentance, to escape his just deserts. A true repentance may help him, but he pays his bill all the same. At the same time, God's mercy is greater than man has ever conceived, and every possible alleviatory circumstance of temptation, heredity and environment is given full weight before punishment is meted out. Such in brief is the general position of the Spiritualistic churches.

In another place * the author has pointed out that though psychical research in itself may be quite distinct from religion, the deductions which we may draw from it and the lessons we may learn, "Teach us of the continued life of the soul, of the nature of that life, and of how it is influenced by our conduct here. If this is distinct from religion, I must confess that I do not understand the distinction. To me it *is* religion —the very essence of it." The author also spoke of Spiritualism as a great unifying force, the one provable thing connected with every religion, Christian or non-

* "The New Revelation," pp. 67–9.

Christian. While its teachings would deeply modify conventional Christianity, the modifications would be rather in the direction of explanation and development than of contradiction. He also referred to the new revelation as absolutely fatal to materialism.

In this material age it may be said that, without a belief in man's survival after death, the message of Christianity falls to a great extent on deaf ears. Dr. McDougall in his presidential address to the American Society for Psychical Research * points out the connexion between the decay of religion and the spread of materialism. He says :

> Unless Psychical Research . . . can discover facts incompatible with materialism, materialism will continue to spread. No other power can stop it; revealed religion and metaphysical philosophy are equally helpless before the advancing tide. And if that tide continues to rise and to advance as it is doing now, all the signs point to the view that it will be a destroying tide, that it will sweep away all the hard-won gains of humanity, all the moral traditions built up by the efforts of countless generations for the increase of truth, justice and charity.

It is important, therefore, to endeavour to see to what degree Spiritualism and psychical research tend to induce or to strengthen religious beliefs.

In the first place, we have many testimonies to the conversion of materialists, through Spiritualism, to a belief in a hereafter, as, for instance, Professor Robert Hare and Professor Mapes in America, with Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, Dr. Elliotson, Dr. Sexton,

* *Journal*, American S.P.R., January, 1923.

Robert Blatchford, John Ruskin, and Robert Owen in England. Many others might be mentioned.

If Spiritualism were understood properly there should be little question of its harmony with religion. The definition of Spiritualism that is printed in each issue of the London Spiritualist weekly journal *Light* is as follows :

" A belief in the existence and life of the spirit apart from and independent of the material organism, and in the reality and value of intelligent intercourse between spirits embodied and spirits discarnate."

Both the beliefs therein expressed are articles of the Christian faith.

If there is one class beyond all others who should be able to talk with authority on the religious tendencies of Spiritualism, it is the clergy. Scores of the more progressive have expressed their views on this subject in no uncertain terms. Let us look at their utterances.

The Rev. H. R. Haweis, M.A., in an address delivered before the London Spiritualist Alliance on April 20, 1900, said he had come there to say that he did not see anything in what he believed to be true Spiritualism in the least degree contrary to what he believed to be true Christianity. Indeed, Spiritualism fitted very nicely into Christianity; it seemed to be a legitimate development, not a contradiction—not an antagonist. . . . The indebtedness of the clergy—if they knew their business—to Spiritualism was really very great. In the first place, Spiritualism

had rehabilitated the Bible. It could not for a moment be denied that faith in and reverence for the Bible were dying out, in consequence of the growing doubts of people regarding the miraculous parts of the Bible. Apologists were thrown entirely on the beauty of the Christian doctrine—but they could not swallow the miraculous element in the Old Testament or the New. They were asked to believe in Bible miracles, and at the same time taught that, outside of the Bible records, nothing supernatural ever happened. But now the whole thing had been reversed. People now believed in the Bible because of Spiritualism; they did not believe in Spiritualism because of the Bible. He went on to say that when he began his ministry he tried to get rid of the miracles out of the Bible by explaining them away. But later on he found that he could not explain away the researches of Crookes, Flammarion, and Alfred Russel Wallace.

The Rev. Arthur Chambers, formerly vicar of Brockenhurst, Hants, has done valuable work by drawing men's minds to a consideration of their spiritual life here and their existence hereafter. His book, "Our Life After Death," has run through over one hundred and twenty editions. In an address on "Spiritualism and the Light it casts on Christian Truth," he says :

Spiritualism, by its persistent investigation of psychic phenomena, by its openly-proclaimed insistence that intercommunication between the two worlds is a present-day fact, has brought great masses of our fellow beings to realize that "There are more things in heaven and earth"

than had been previously "dreamed of in their philosophy," and have made many of them, as Christian men and women, understand a mighty truth interwoven with religion—a truth fundamental to a right understanding of our place in a great universe—a truth which mankind in all ages has clung to, in spite of the incredulous frowns and disapproval of the teachers of religion. There comes to my mind, in conclusion, the thought of a particular way in which the teachings of Spiritualism have uplifted the religious ideas of the present age. It has helped us to form a truer and grander notion of God and His purpose

In another fine passage he says:

Yes, Spiritualism has done much, very much, towards the better understanding of those grand basal facts which are inseparable from the Gospel of Jesus. It has helped men and women to see with clearer vision the Great Spirit Father—God, in whom we live, move and have our being, and that vast spirit universe of which we *now* are, and ever must be, a constituted part. As a Christian Spiritualist, I have one great hope—one great conviction of what will be—viz., that Spiritualism, which has done so much for Christian teaching and for the world at large, in scaring away the bugbear of death, and in helping us better to realize that which a magnificent Christ really taught, will recognize fully what that Christ is in the light of spiritual verities.

Mr. Chambers further added that he had received many hundreds of letters from all parts of the world from writers who expressed the relief and comfort, as well as the fuller trust in God, which had come to them from reading his own book, "Our Life After Death."

The Rev. F. Fielding-Ould, M.A., vicar of Christ Church, Regent's Park, London, is another of those who boldly proclaim the good work to be done by Spiritualism. In an address (April 21, 1921) on "The Relation of Spiritualism to Christianity," he said:

The world needs the teaching of Spiritualism. The number of irreligious people in London to-day is astonishing in the last degree. There are an immense number of people in every class of society (and I am speaking from my own experience) who are totally without any religion whatever. They do not pray, they never attend any church for common worship, in their consciousness and habit of thought death stands at the end. There is nothing beyond but a thick, white mist into which their imagination is sternly forbidden ever to wander. They may call themselves of the Church of England, Roman Catholics, or Jews, but they are like empty bottles in a cellar still marked with the labels of famous vintages.

He adds:

It is no unusual thing for struggling and distressed souls to be *helped through Spiritualism*. Do we not all know people who had given up all religion and who have been brought back by its means? Agnostics who had lost all hope of God and immortality, to whom religion seemed mere formality and dry bones, and who at last turned upon it and reviled it in all its manifestations. Then Spiritualism came to them like the dawn to a man who has tossed all night fevered and sleepless. At first they were astonished and incredulous, but their attention was arrested, and presently they were touched to the heart. God had come back into their lives and nothing could express their joy and gratitude.

The Rev. Charles Tweedale, vicar of Weston, Yorkshire, a man who has laboured bravely in this cause, refers to the consideration of Spiritualism by the Bishops' Conference held at Lambeth Palace from July 5 to August 7, 1920, and, speaking of modern psychical research, says :*

While the world at large has been filled with an eager awakening interest, the Church, which claims to be the custodian of religious and spiritual truth, has, strange to say, until quite recently, turned a deaf ear to all modern evidences bearing upon the reality of that spiritual world to which it is the main object of her existence to testify, and even now is only just showing faint signs that she realizes how important this matter is becoming for her. . . . A recent sign of the times was the discussion of psychic phenomena at the Lambeth Conference, and the placing by the secretary of my brochure "Present Day Spirit Phenomena and the Churches" in the hands of all the Bishops present, with the Archbishops' consent. Another significant sign of the times is the choice of Sir William Barrett to address the Church Congress on psychical subjects.

The Report of the Proceedings of the Lambeth Conference, already referred to, alludes as follows to psychic research :

It is possible that we may be on the threshold of a new science, which will, by another method of approach, confirm us in the assurance of a world behind and beyond the world we see, and of something within us by which we are in contact with it. We could never presume to set a limit to means which God may use to bring man to the realization of spiritual life.

* *Light*, October 30, 1920.

Having made this precautionary utterance, the report flies to safety with the added proviso:

But there is nothing in the cult erected on this science which enhances, there is, indeed, much which obscures, the meaning of that other world and our relation to it as unfolded in the Gospel of Christ and the teaching of the Church, and which depreciates the means given to us of attaining and abiding in fellowship with that world.

Under the heading "Spiritualism," the Report says:

While recognizing that the results of investigation have encouraged many people to find a spiritual meaning and purpose in human life, and led them to believe in survival after death, grave dangers are seen in the tendency to make a religion of Spiritualism. The practice of Spiritualism as a cult involves the subordination of the intelligence and the will to unknown forces or personalities and, to that extent, an abdication of self-control.

A well-known contributor to *Light*, who takes the pseudonym of "Gerson," thus comments on the above:

There is undoubted danger in "the subordination of the intelligence and the will to unknown forces or personalities," but the practice of spirit communication does not, as the Bishops appear to think, necessarily involve such subordination. Another danger, in their view, is "the tendency to make a religion of Spiritualism." *Light*, and those who associate themselves with its attitude, have never felt any inclination to do this. The possibility of spirit communication is simply a fact in Nature, and we do not approve of exalting any fact in Nature into a religion. At the same time a lofty form of religion may be associated

with a fact in Nature. The recognition of the beauty and order of the universe does not in itself constitute religion, but in so far as it inspires reverence for the Source of that beauty and order it is a help to the religious spirit.

At the English Church Congress in 1920 the Rev. M. A. Bayfield read a paper on " Psychic Science an Ally of Christianity," and in the course of it he said:

Many of the clergy regard psychic science with suspicion, and some with positive antagonism and alarm. Under its popular *name*, Spiritualism, it had *even* been denounced as anti-Christian. He would endeavour to show that this branch of study was altogether an ally of our faith. Everyone was a Spiritualist who was not a materialist, and Christianity itself was essentially a Spiritualistic religion.

He went on to refer to the service Spiritualism had rendered to Christianity by making possible a belief in the miraculous element in the Gospel.

Dr. Elwood Worcester, in a sermon entitled " The Allies of Religion,"* delivered at St. Stephen's Church, Philadelphia, on February 25, 1923, spoke of psychical research as the true friend of religion and a spiritual ally of man. He said :

It also illuminates many an important event in the life of the Lord, and it helps us to understand and accept occurrences which otherwise we should reject. I think, particularly, of the phenomena attending the baptism of Jesus, His appearance on the Sea of Galilee, His transfiguration, above all His resurrection appearance to His disciples. Moreover, this is our only real hope of solving

* *Journal*, American S.P.R., June, 1923, p. 323.

the problem of death. From no other source is any new solution of this eternal mystery likely to come to us.

The Rev. G. Vale Owen reminds us that though there are Spiritualists who are distinctly Christian Spiritualists, Spiritualism is not confined to Christianity. There is, for instance, a Jewish Spiritualist Society in London. The Church at first regarded Evolution as an adversary, but finally came to accept it as in accordance with Christian faith. So he concludes that :

> Just as the acceptance of Evolution gave to Christianity a broader and more worthy conception of Creation and its Creator, so the acceptance of the great truths for which psychic science stands should turn an agnostic into a believer in God, should make a Jew a better Jew, a Mohammedan a better Mohammedan, a Christian a better Christian, and certainly a happier and more cheerful one.*

It is clear from the foregoing extracts that many clergymen of the Church of England and other Churches are agreed upon the good influence Spiritualism has upon religion.

There is another important source of information for opinions respecting the religious tendencies of Spiritualism. That is from the spirit world itself. There is a wealth of material to draw from, but we must be content with a few extracts. The first is from that well-known book, "Spirit Teachings," given through the mediumship of Stainton Moses :

> Friend, when others seek from you as to the usefulness of our message, and the benefit which it can confer on

* "Facts and the Future Life" (1922), p. 170.

those to whom the Father sends it, tell them that it is a gospel which will reveal a God of tenderness and pity and love, instead of a fabled creation of harshness, cruelty and passions

Tell them that it will lead them to know Intelligences, whose whole life is one of love and mercy and pity and helpful aid to man, combined with adoration of the Supreme.

Or this from the same source:

Man has gradually built around the teachings of Jesus a wall of deduction and speculation and material comment similar to that with which the Pharisee had surrounded the Mosaic law. The tendency has been increasingly to do this in proportion as man has lost sight of the spiritual world. And so it has come to pass that we find hard, cold materialism deduced from teachings which were intended to breathe spirituality and to do away with sensuous ritual.

It is our task to do for Christianity what Jesus did for Judaism. We would take the old forms and spiritualize their meaning, and infuse into them new life. Resurrection rather than abolition is what we desire. We say again that we do not abolish one jot or one tittle of the teaching which the Christ gave to the world. We do but wipe away man's material glosses, and show you the hidden spiritual meaning which he has missed. . . . Our mission is the continuation of that old teaching which man has so strangely altered; its source identical; its course parallel; its end the same.

And this from W. T. Stead's "Letters from Julia":

You have had teaching as to the communion of saints; you say and sing all manner of things as to the saints

above and below being one army of the Living God, but when any one of us on the Other Side tries to make any practical effort to enable you to realize the oneness, and to make you feel that you are encompassed about by so great a cloud of witnesses, then there is an outcry. It is against the will of God! It is tampering with demons! It is conjuring up evil spirits! Oh, my friend, my friend, be not deceived by these specious outcries! Am I a demon? Am I a familiar spirit? Am I doing what is contrary to the will of God when I constantly, constantly try to inspire you with more faith in Him, more love for Him and all His creatures, and, in short, try to bring you nearer and closer to God? You know I do all this. It is my joy and the law of my being.

And, finally, this extract from "Messages from Meslom":

Any teaching which helps humanity to believe that there is another life and that the soul is strengthened by trials bravely met and weaknesses conquered is good, for it has that much fundamental truth. When, in addition, it reveals a God of love, it is better; and if humanity could comprehend this Divine love, all suffering, even on earth, would cease.

These passages are lofty in tone and certainly tend to draw men's minds to higher things and to the understanding of the deeper purposes of life.

F. W. H. Myers's lost faith in Christianity was restored through Spiritualism. In his book "Fragments of Prose and Poetry," in the chapter entitled "The Final Faith," he says:

I cannot, in any deep sense, contrast my present creed with Christianity. Rather I regard it as a scientific development of the attitude and teaching of Christ.

You ask me what is the moral tendency of all these teachings—the reply is unexpectedly simple and concise. The tendency is, one may say, what it must inevitably be—what the tendency of all vital moral teaching has always been—the earliest, truest tendency of Christianity itself. It is a reassertion—weighed now with new evidence—of Christ's own insistence on inwardness, on reality; of His proclamation that the letter killeth but the spirit giveth life, of His summation of all righteousness in sheer love to God and man.

Many writers have spoken of the light thrown on the Bible narrative by modern psychical research, but the finest expression of this view is to be found in F. W. H. Myers's "Human Personality":

I venture now on a bold saying; for I predict that, in consequence of the new evidence, all reasonable men, a century hence, will believe the Resurrection of Christ, whereas, in default of the new evidence, no reasonable men, a century hence, would have believed it. . . . And especially as to that central claim, of the soul's life manifested after the body's death, it is plain that this can less and less be supported by remote tradition alone; that it must more and more be tested by modern experience and inquiry. Suppose, for instance, that we collect many such histories, recorded on first-hand evidence in our critical age; and suppose that all these narratives break down on analysis; that they can all be traced to hallucination, misdescription, and other persistent sources of error; can we then expect reasonable men to believe that this marvellous phenomenon, always vanishing into nothingness when closely scrutinized in a modern English scene, must yet compel adoring credence when alleged to have occurred in an Oriental country, and in a remote and superstitious age? Had the results (in short) of "Psychical Research" been

purely negative, would not Christian evidence—I do not say Christian *emotion*, but Christian *evidence*—have received an overwhelming blow ?

Many testimonies from eminent public men might be cited. Sir Oliver Lodge writes :

Although it is not by my religious faith that I have been led to my present position, yet everything that I have learned tends to increase my love and reverence for the personality of the central figure in the gospels.

Lady Grey of Fallodon * pays an eloquent tribute to Spiritualism, describing it as something that has vitalized religion and brought comfort to thousands. Speaking of Spiritualists, she says:

As a body of workers they are closer to the spirit of the New Testament than many Church folk would be ready to believe. The Church of England should look upon Spiritualism as a valuable ally. It makes a central attack upon Materialism, and it not only identifies the material with the spiritual universe, but it has a store of useful knowledge and advice

She adds :

I find in it a vitalizing current that brings the living breath to old beliefs. . . . The Word that we are wont to associate with Holy Writ is, in essence, identical with the message that is coming to us in these later scripts. Those of us who have the New Revelation at heart, know that Spiritualism gives a modern reading of the Bible, and this is why—if the Churches would but see it—it should be considered religion's great ally.

These are brave words and true.

* *Fortnightly Review*, October, 1922.

Dr. Eugene Crowell* shows that the Roman Catholic Church holds that spiritual manifestations are constantly occurring under the divine authority of the Church; but the Protestant Churches, while professing to believe in the spiritual manifestations occurring with Jesus and His disciples, repudiate all similar happenings at the present day. He says:

> Thus the Protestant Church, when approached by the spiritually starved—and millions are in this condition—from the depths of whose natures arises an overpowering demand for spiritual aliment, has nothing to offer—or at best nothing but husks. . . .
>
> Protestantism to-day finds itself pressed between the upper and nether millstones of materialism and Catholicism Each of these powers is bearing upon it with increasing force, and it must assimilate and incorporate within itself one or other of these, or itself be ground to powder. In its present condition it lacks the necessary strength and vitality to resist the action of these forces, and its only hope is in the fresh blood which Spiritualism alone is able to infuse into its exhausted veins. That it is part of the mission of Spiritualism to accomplish this task, I fully believe, and this belief is founded upon the palpable needs of Protestantism, and a clear conception of the adaptability of Spiritualism to the task, and its ability to perform it.

Dr. Crowell declares that the diffusion of knowledge has not made modern men less regardful of questions concerning their spiritual life and future existence, but to-day they demand proof of what was formerly accepted upon faith alone. Theology is

* "The Identity of Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism." 2 Vols, 2nd Edition, New York, 1875.

unable to furnish this proof, and millions of earnest minds, he says, stand aloof waiting for satisfactory evidence. Spiritualism, he contends, has been sent to furnish this evidence, and from no other source can it be supplied.

Some reference should be made to the views of the Unitarian Spiritualists. Their very able and wholehearted leader is Ernest W. Oaten, Editor of *The Two Worlds*. Mr. Oaten's view, which is shared by all save a small body of extremists, is rather a reconstruction than a destruction of the Christian ideal. After a very reverent account of the life of Christ as explained by our psychic knowledge, he continues :

Men tell me I despise Jesus of Nazareth. I will trust His judgment rather than theirs, but I think I know His life more intimately than any Christian can. There is no soul in history that I hold in higher esteem. I hate the false and misleading place in which He has been put by folks who are no more able to understand Him than they are to read Egyptian hieroglyphics, but I love the man. I owe Him much, and He has much to teach the world which the world can never learn until they take Him from the pedestal of worship and idolatry, and walk with Him in the garden.

It may be said that my reading of His life is " naturalistic." I am content that it should be so. There is nothing more divine than the laws which govern life. The God who laid down such laws made them sufficient for all His purposes and has no need to supersede them. The God who controls earthly processes is the same as He who controls the processes of spiritual life.*

* "The Relation of Modern Spiritualism to Christianity," p. 23.

There the matter may be left. This history has endeavoured to show how special material signs have been granted by the invisible rulers of earth to satisfy the demand for material proofs which come from the increasing mentality of man. It has shown also how these material signs have been accompanied by spiritual messages, and how these messages get back to the great primitive religious forces of the world, the central fire of inspiration which has been ashed over by the dead cinders of what once were burning creeds. Man had lost touch with the vast forces which lie around him, and his knowledge and aspirations had become bounded by the pitiful vibrations which make up his spectrum and the trivial octaves which limit his range of hearing. Spiritualism, the greatest movement for 2,000 years, rescues him from this condition, bursts the thin mists which have enshrouded him, and shows him new powers and unlimited vistas which lie beyond and around him. Already the mountain peaks are bright. Soon even in the valleys the sun of truth will shine.

CHAPTER XXV

THE AFTER-LIFE AS SEEN BY SPIRITUALISTS

THE Spiritualist has one great advantage over those of the older dispensations. When he establishes communication with intelligences upon the Other Side who once inhabited earthly bodies, he naturally questions them eagerly as to their present conditions, and as to the effect which their doings here have had upon their subsequent fate. The answers to the latter query do in the main justify the views already held by most religions, and show that the path of virtue is also the road to ultimate happiness. A definite system is presented, however, for our consideration which greatly elucidates the vague cosmogonies of former ages. This system has been set forth in many books which recount the experience of those who have led the new life. It is to be remembered that these books are not written by professional penmen. On this side is the so-called "automatic" writer who receives the inspiration, on the other is the intelligence which transmits it; but neither may have been gifted by Nature with the least literary power, or have had any previous experience in putting together a narrative. It has also to be borne in mind that whatever comes through is the result of a cumbrous process, which must in most cases be

irksome for the composer. If we could imagine an earthly writer who has to use a long-distance telephone instead of a pen, one would have some rough analogy to the difficulties of the operator. And yet, in spite of these grave disabilities, the narratives are in many cases clear, dramatic, and intensely interesting. They can hardly fail to be the latter, since the pathway which they describe to-day is that which we shall follow to-morrow.

It has been said that these narratives vary greatly and are contradictory. The author has not found them so. In a long course of reading in which he has perused many volumes of alleged posthumous experiences, and also a great number of scripts obtained privately in families and reserved from the public, he has been struck by their general agreement. Here and there one comes upon some story which bears self-deception written plainly across it, and occasionally there is a lapse into sensationalism, but in the main the descriptions are sober, reasonable, and agree in general type with each other, even when they differ in details. Descriptions of our own life would certainly differ in details, and a critic from Mars who was presented with accounts from a Hindu peasant, an Eskimo hunter, and an Oxford professor, might well refuse to believe that such divergent experiences were to be found upon the same planet. This difficulty does not arise upon the Other Side, and there are, so far as we know, no such extreme contrasts upon the same sphere of life—indeed, it might be said that the characteristic of this present life is the mingling of

various types or degrees of experience, while that of the next is a subdivision and separation of the human elements. Heaven there is distinct from hell. In this world at present man might, and sometimes for a short time does, make it a heaven, but there are large tracts of it which are very tolerable imitations of hell, while purgatory may well be called the normal condition.

The conditions upon the Other Side may roughly be divided into three. There are the earth-bound who have exchanged their mortal for their etheric bodies, but are held on or near the surface of this world by the grossness of their nature or by the intensity of their worldly interests. So coarse may be the texture of their other-world form, that they may even bring themselves within the cognizance of those who have no special gift of clairvoyance. In this unhappy wandering class lies the explanation of all those ghosts, spectres, apparitions, and haunted houses which have engaged the attention of mankind at every epoch of history. These people have, so far as we can understand the situation, not even commenced their spiritual life either for good or evil. It is only when the strong earth ties are broken that the new existence begins.

Those who have really begun that existence find themselves in that stratum of life which corresponds to their own spiritual condition. It is the punishment of the cruel, the selfish, the bigoted and the frivolous, that they find themselves in the company of their like, and in worlds the illumination of which, varying from

mist to darkness, typifies their own spiritual development. Such an environment is not a permanent one. Those who will not make an upward effort may, however, remain in it an indefinite time, while others who turn an ear to the ministrations of helpful spirits, even of rescue circles upon earth, soon learn to struggle upwards into brighter zones. In the author's own family communion, he has known what it was to come in contact with these beings from the outer darkness, and to have the satisfaction of receiving their thanks for having given them a clearer view of their position, its causes and its cure.*

Such spirits would seem to be a constant menace to mankind, for if the protective aura of the individual should be in any way defective, they may become parasitic, establishing themselves within it and influencing the actions of their host. It is possible that the science of the future may trace many cases of inexplicable mania, senseless violence, or sudden surrender to bad habits to this cause, and it forms an argument against capital punishment, since the result might be to give enlarged powers of mischief to the criminal. It must be admitted that the subject is still obscure, that it is complicated by the existence of thought forms and memory forms, and that in any case all earth-bound spirits are not necessarily evil. It would appear, for example, that the devoted monks of some venerable Glastonbury might be held to their old haunts by the pure force of their devotion.

* Dr. Wickland's "Thirty Years among the Dead," and the Appendix to Admiral Usborne Moore's "Glimpses of the Next State," give the fullest account of earth-bound conditions.

If our knowledge of the exact condition of the earth-bound is defective, that of the punitive circles is even more so. There is a somewhat sensational account in Mr. Ward's "Gone West"; there is a more temperate and credible one in the Rev. Vale Owen's "Life Beyond the Veil," and there are corroborative ones in Swedenborg's visions, in Judge Edmonds's "Spiritualism," and in other volumes. Our lack of clear first-hand information is due to the fact that we are not Hamlets, and that we do not get into direct touch with those who live in these lower spheres. We hear of them indirectly through those higher spirits who do missionary work among them, work which seems to be attended with such difficulties and dangers as might surround the man who tried to evangelize the darker races of earth. We read of the descent of high spirits into the lower spheres, of their combats with the forces of evil, of high princes of evil who are formidable in their own realms, and of a whole great cloaca of souls into which the psychic sewage of the world incessantly pours. Everything, however, has to be regarded from the remedial rather than from the penal point of view. These spheres are grey waiting-rooms—hospitals for diseased souls—where the chastening experience is intended to bring the sufferer back to health and to happiness.

Our information is fuller when we turn to the happier regions which seem to be graduated in joy and beauty in accordance with the spiritual development of the inmates. It makes the matter clearer if one puts kindliness and unselfishness for "spiritual

development," for in that direction all soul growth is to be found. It is certainly a matter which is quite apart from intellect, though the union of intellect with spiritual qualities would naturally produce the more perfect being.

The conditions of life in the normal beyond—and it would be a reflection upon the justice and mercy of the Central Intelligence if the normal beyond was not also the happy beyond—are depicted as being extraordinarily joyous. The air, the views, the homes, the surroundings, the occupations, have all been described with great detail, and usually with the comment that no words could do justice to their glorious reality. It may be that there is some degree of parable or analogy in these descriptions, but the author is inclined to take them on their face value, and to believe that " the Summerland," as Davis has named it, is quite as real and objective to its inmates as our world is to us. It is easy to raise the objection : " Why, then, do we not see it ? " But we must realize that an etheric life is expressed in etheric terms, and that just as we, with five material senses, are attuned to the material world, so they with their etheric bodies are attuned to the sights and sounds of an etheric world. The word " ether " is, of course, only used for convenience to express something far more subtle than our atmosphere. We have no proof at all that the ether of the physicist is also the medium of the spirit world. There may be other fine essences which are as much more delicate than ether as ether is when compared with air.

The spiritual heavens, then, would appear to be sublimated and ethereal reproductions of earth and of earth life under higher and better conditions. "As below—so above," said Paracelsus, and struck the keynote of the Universe as he said it. The body carries on, with its spiritual or intellectual qualities unchanged by the transition from one room of the great universal mansion to the next one. It is unaltered also in form, save that the young and the old tend towards the normal full-grown mature expression. Granting that this is so, we must admit the reasonableness of the deduction that all else must be the same, and that the occupations and general system of life must be such as to afford scope for the particular talents of the individual. The artist without art or the musician without music would indeed be a tragic figure, and what applies to extreme types may be extended to the whole human race. There is, in fact, a very complex society in which each person finds that work to do which he is best fitted for, and which gives him satisfaction in the doing. Sometimes there is a choice. Thus in "The Case of Lester Coltman" the dead student writes: "For some time after I had passed over I was undecided as to whether music or science would be my *work*. After much serious thought I determined that music should be my *hobby*, and my more earnest intent should be directed upon science in every form."

After such a declaration one would naturally wish some details as to what scientific work was done and

under what conditions. Lester Coltman is clear upon each point.

The laboratory over which I have control is primarily concerned with the study of the vapours and fluids forming the barrier which, we feel, by dint of profound study and experiment we may be able to pierce. The outcome of this research, we believe, will prove the Open Sesame to the door of communing between earth and these spheres.*

Lester Coltman gives a further description of his work and surroundings, which may well be quoted as being typical of many more. He says :†

The interest evinced by earth beings as to the character of our homes and the establishments where our work is carried on, is natural, of course, but description is not too easy to convey in earth terms. My state of being will serve as an example from which you may deduce others' modes of life, according to temperament and type of mind.

My work is continued here as it began on earth, in scientific channels, and, in order to pursue my studies, I visit frequently a laboratory possessing extraordinarily complete facilities for the carrying on of experiments. I have a home of my own, delightful in the extreme, complete with library filled with books of reference—historical, scientific, medical—and, in fact, with every type of literature. To us these books are as substantial as those used on earth are to you. I have a music-room containing every mode of sound-expression. I have pictures of rare beauty and furnishings of exquisite design. I am living here alone at present, but friends frequently visit me as I do them in their homes, and if a faint sadness at times takes possession of me, I visit those I loved most on earth.

* "Case of Lester Coltman," by Lilian Walbrook, p. 34.

† *Ibid*, pp. 32-33.

From my windows undulating country of great beauty is seen, and at a short distance away a house of community exists, where many good souls working in my laboratory live in happy concord. . . . A dear old Chinaman, my chief assistant, of great help in chemical analysis, is director, as it were, of this community. He is an admirable soul, of huge sympathy and endowed with a great philosophy

Here is another description which deals with this matter : *

It is very difficult to tell you about work in the spirit world. It is allotted to each one his portion, according to how he has progressed. If a soul has come direct from earth, or any material world, he must then be taught all he has neglected in the former existence, in order to make his character grow to perfection. As he has made those on earth suffer, so he himself suffers. If he has a great talent, *that* he brings to perfection here; for if you have beautiful music, or any other talent, we have them here much more. Music is one of the great moving forces of our world; but although arts and talents are carried to their fullest, it is the great work of all souls to perfect themselves for the Eternal Life.

There are great schools to teach the spirit children. Besides learning all about the universe and other worlds, about other kingdoms under God's rule, they are taught lessons of unselfishness and truth and honour. Those who have learned first as spirit-children, if they should come into your world, make the finer characters.

Those who have spent all their material existence in merely physical labours, have to learn everything when they come here. Work is a wonderful life, and those who become teachers of souls learn so much themselves. Literary souls become great orators, and speak and teach in

* Thought Lectures, from "The Spiritualists' Reader," p. 53.

eloquent language. There are books, but of quite a different kind from yours. One who has studied your earth-laws would go into the spirit-school as a teacher of justice. A soldier, when he himself has learned the lessons of truth and honour, will guide and help souls, in any sphere or world, to fight for the right faith in God.

In the author's Home Circle an intimate spirit spoke of her life in the beyond in answer to the question, "What do you do?"

"Music and children, loving and mothering and lots of other things besides. Far, far more here than on the old grey earth. Nothing in the people round ever jars. That makes everything happier and more complete."

"Tell us about your dwelling."

"It is lovely. I never saw any house on earth to compare with it. So many flowers!—a blaze of colour in all directions and they have such wonderful scents, each one different, but all blending so deliciously."

"Can you see other houses?"

"No, it would spoil the peace if you could. One wants nature only at times. Every home is an oasis, as it were. Beyond is wonderful scenery and other sweet homes full of dear, sweet, bright people full of laughter and joy from the mere fact of living in such wonderful surroundings. Yes, it is beautiful. No earth mind can conceive the light and wonder of it all. The colours are so much daintier, and the whole scheme of the home life is so much more radiant."

Another extract from the author's Home Circle.

may, perhaps, be excused, since these messages have been mixed with so much evidential matter that they inspire complete confidence in those who have been in touch with the facts :

" For God's sake, strike at these people, these dolts who will not believe. The world so needs this knowledge. If I had only known this on earth it would have so altered my life—the sun would have shone on my grey path had I known what lay before me.

" Nothing jars over here. There are no cross-currents. I am interested in many things, mostly human, the progress of human development, above all the regeneration of the earth-plane. I am one of those who are working for the cause on this side hand-and-glove with you.

" Never fear; the light will be the greater for the darkness you have passed through. It will come very soon, as God wills it. Nothing can stand against that. No powers of darkness can stand for one minute against His light. All the crowd working against it will be swept away. Lean more on us, for our power to help is very great.

[Where are you ?]

" It is so difficult to explain to you the conditions over here. I am where I would most wish to be, that is, with my loved ones, where I can keep in close touch with you all on the earth-plane.

[Have you food ?]

" Not in your sense, but much nicer. Such lovely essences and wonderful fruits and other things besides, which you don't have on earth.

" Much awaits you which will very much surprise you, all beautiful and high, and so sweet and sunny. Life was a preparation for this sphere. Without that training I could not have been able to enter this glorious, wonderful world. The earth is where we learn our lessons, and this world is our great reward, our true and real home and life—the sunshine after the rain."

The subject is so enormous that it can only be touched upon in general terms in a single chapter. The reader is referred to the wonderful literature which has grown up, hardly noticed by the world, around the subject. Such books as Lodge's " Raymond," Vale Owen's " Life Beyond the Veil," Mrs. Platts's " The Witness," Miss Walbrook's " Case of Lester Coltman," and many other volumes give clear and consistent representations of the life beyond.

In reading the numerous accounts of life in the hereafter, one naturally asks oneself how far they are to be trusted. It is reassuring to find how greatly they are in agreement, which is surely an argument for their truth. It might be contended that this agreement is due to their all being derived, consciously or not, from some common source, but this is an untenable supposition. Many of them come from people who could by no means have learned the views of others, and yet they agree even in small and rather unlikely details. In Australia, for example, the author examined such accounts written by men living in remote places who were honestly amazed at what they had themselves

written. One of the most striking cases is that of Mr. Hubert Wales.* This gentleman, who had been, and possibly is, a sceptic, read an account by the author of after-life conditions, and then hunted up a script which he had himself written years before and had been received by him with amused incredulity. He wrote: "After reading your article I was struck, almost startled, by the circumstance that the statements which had purported to be made to me regarding conditions after death coincided—I think almost to the smallest detail—with those you set out as the result of your collation of material obtained from many sources." The remainder of Mr. Wales's conclusions will be found in the Appendix.

Had this philosophy all turned upon the great white throne and perpetual adoration around it, it might be set down as some reflection of that which we have all been taught in our childhood. But it is very different—and surely very much more reasonable. An open field is predicated for the development of all those capacities with which we have been endowed. Orthodoxy has permitted the continued existence of thrones, crowns, harps, and other celestial objects. Is it not more sensible to suppose that if some things can survive, all things can survive, in such form as suits the environment? As we survey all the speculations of mankind, perhaps the Elysian fields of the ancients and the happy hunting-grounds of the Red Indians are nearer the actual facts than any fantastic presen-

* "The New Revelation," p. 146

tation of heaven and hell which the ecstatic vision of theologians has conjured up.

So workaday and homely a heaven may seem material to many minds, but we must remember that evolution has been very slow upon the physical plane, and it is slow also upon the spiritual one. In our present lowly condition we cannot expect at one bound to pass all intermediate conditions and attain to what is celestial. This will be the work of centuries—possibly of æons. We are not fit yet for a purely spiritual life. But as we ourselves become finer, so will our environment become finer, and we shall evolve from heaven to heaven until the destiny of the human soul is lost in a blaze of glory whither the eye of imagination may not follow.

APPENDIX

I

Notes to Chapter IV

Evidence of the Haunting of the Hydesville House before the Fox Family occupied it

Mrs. Ann Pulver certifies:

I was acquainted with Mr. and Mrs. Bell (who occupied the house in 1844). I used to call on them frequently. My warping bars were in their chamber, and I used to go there to do my work. One morning when I went there Mrs. Bell told me that she felt very bad; that she had not slept much, if any, the night before. When I asked her what the matter was, she said she didn't know but what it was the fidgets; but she thought she heard somebody walking about from one room to another, and that she had Mr. Bell get up and fasten down all the windows. She said she felt more safe after that. I asked her what she thought it was. She said it *might* be rats. I heard her speak about hearing noises after that, which she could not account for.

Miss Lucretia Pulver gave testimony:

I lived in this house all one winter, in the family of Mr. Bell. I worked for them part of the time, and part of the time I boarded and went to school I lived there about three months. During the latter part of the time that I was there I heard this knocking frequently in the bedroom, under the foot of the bed. I heard it a number of nights, as I slept in the bedroom all the time that I staid there. One night I thought I heard a man walking in the buttery. This buttery is near the bedroom, with a stairway between. Miss Aurelia Losey staid with me on that night; she also heard the noise, and we were both much frightened, and got up and fastened down the windows and fastened the door. It sounded as if a person walked through the buttery, down cellar, and part way across the cellar-bottom, and there the noise would cease. There was no one else in the house at this

time, except my little brother, who was asleep in the same room with us. This was about twelve o'clock, I should think. We did not go to bed until after eleven, and had not been asleep when we heard the noise. Mr. and Mrs. Bell had gone to Loch Berlin, to be gone until the next day.

Thus it is proved that strange sounds were heard in the house in 1844. Another family named Weekman lived there in 1846–7, and they had a similar experience.

Statement of Mrs. Hannah Weekman

I have heard about the mysterious noises that have been heard in the house now occupied by Mr. Fox. We used to live in the same house; we lived there about a year and a half and moved from there to the house we now occupy. About a year ago, while we were living there, we heard someone, as we supposed, rapping on the outside door. I had just got into bed, but my husband had not. He went and opened it, and said that there was no one there. He came back, and was about getting into bed when we heard the rapping on the door again. He then went to the door and opened it, and said that he could see no one, although he stepped out a little way. He then came back and got into bed. He was quite angry; he thought 'twas some of the neighbouring boys trying to disturb us, and said that "They might knock away, but they would not fool him," or something of that kind. The knocking was heard again, and after a while he got up and went to the door and went out. I told him not to go outdoors, for perhaps somebody wanted to get him out and hurt him. He came back, and said he could see nothing. We heard a good deal of noise during the night; we could hardly tell where it was: it sounded sometimes as if someone was walking in the cellar. But the house was old, and we thought it might be the rattling of loose boards, or something of that kind.

A few nights afterwards, one of our little girls, who slept in the bedroom where the noises are now heard, woke us all up by screaming very loud. My husband and I, and our hired girl, got up immediately to see what was the matter. She sat up in bed, crying and screaming, and it was some time before we could find out what the matter was. She said that something had been moving about, over her head and face—that it was cold, and she did not know what it was. She said that she felt it all over her, but she was most alarmed at feeling it on her face. She was very much frightened. This was between twelve and one o'clock at night. She got up and got into bed with us, and it was a long time before she could go to sleep. It was several days

before we could get her to sleep in that room again. She was eight years old at that time.

Nothing else happened to me during the time that we lived there; but my husband told me that one night he heard someone call him by name, somewhere in the house—he did not know where—but could never find out where or what it was. I was not at home that night. I was sitting up with a sick person. We did not think the house was haunted at that time. . .

(*Signed*) HANNAH WEEKMAN.

April 11, 1848.

Statement of Michael Weekman

I am the husband of Hannah Weekman. We used to live in the house now occupied by Mr. Fox, in which they say strange noises are heard. We lived there about a year and a half. One evening, about bedtime, I heard the rapping. I supposed it was someone knocking at the door who wanted to come in. I did not bid him "Come in," as I usually do, but went to the door I did not find anyone there, but went back, and just as I was getting into bed I heard the rapping again and opened the door quick, but could see no one there. I stepped out a step or two, but could see no one about there. I then went back and got into bed. I thought someone was making game of me. After a few minutes I heard the knocking again, and after waiting a few minutes and still hearing it, I got up and went to the door. This time I went clear out and looked around the house, but could find no one. I then stepped back and shut the door, and held on to the latch, thinking that if there was anyone there I would catch them at it. In a minute or two I heard the rapping again. My hand was on the door, and the knocking appeared to be on the door. I could feel it jar with the raps. I instantly opened the door and sprang out, but there was no one in sight. I then went round the house again, but could find no one, as before. My wife told me I had better not go out of doors, as it might be someone that wanted to hurt me. I did not know what to think of it, it seemed so strange and unaccountable.

He here relates the case of the little girl being frightened, as given above.

One night after this, about midnight, I was awake, and heard my name called. It sounded as if it was on the south side of the room. I sat up in bed and listened, but did not hear it again. I did not get out of bed, but waited to see if it would be repeated. My wife was not at home that night. I told her of it afterwards, and she said she

guessed I had been dreaming. My wife used to be frightened quite often by hearing strange noises in and about the house.

I have heard so much from men in whom I place confidence about these noises that are now heard, that, taken in connexion with what I heard, I cannot account for it, unless it is a supernatural appearance. I am willing to make affidavit to the above facts if necessary.

(*Signed*) MICHAEL WEEKMAN.

April 11, 1848.

EXTRACT FROM HORACE GREELEY'S ARTICLE IN THE *NEW YORK TRIBUNE*, GIVING HIS OPINION OF THE FOX SISTERS AND THEIR MEDIUMSHIP*

The Mysterious Rappings

MRS FOX and her three daughters left our city yesterday on their return to Rochester, after a stay here of some weeks, during which they have subjected the mysterious influence, by which they seem to be accompanied, to every reasonable test, and to the keen and critical scrutiny of hundreds who have chosen to visit them, or whom they have been invited to visit. The rooms which they occupied at the hotel have been repeatedly searched and scrutinized; they have been taken without an hour's notice into houses they had never before entered; they have been all unconsciously placed on a glass surface concealed under the carpet in order to interrupt electrical vibrations; they have been disrobed by a committee of ladies appointed without notice, and insisting that neither of them should leave the room until the investigation has been made, etc., etc., yet we believe no one, to this moment, pretends that he has detected either of them in producing or causing the "rappings," nor do we think any of their contemners has invented a plausible theory to account for the production of these sounds, nor the singular intelligence which (certainly at times) has seemed to be manifest through them.

Some ten or twelve days since they gave up their rooms at the hotel and devoted the remainder of their sojourn here to visiting several families, to which they had been invited by persons interested in the subject, and subjecting the singular influence to a closer, calmer examination than could be given to it at a hotel, and before casual companies of strangers, drawn together by vague curiosity more than rational interest, or predetermined and invincible hostility.

* Capron, "Modern Spiritualism," pp. 179–181.

Our own dwelling was among those they thus visited; not only submitting to, but courting, the fullest and keenest inquiry with regard to the alleged " manifestations " from the spirit-world, by which they were attended.

We devoted what time we could spare from our duties out of three days to this subject, and it would be the basest cowardice not to say that we are convinced beyond a doubt of *their perfect integrity and good faith* in the premises. Whatever may be the origin or cause of the " rappings," the ladies in whose presence they occur do not make them. We tested this thoroughly and to our entire satisfaction.

Their conduct and bearing is as unlike that of deceivers as possible, and we think no one acquainted with them could believe them at all capable of engaging in so daring, impious, and shameful a juggle as this would be if they caused the sounds. And it is not possible that such a juggle should have been so long perpetrated in public. A juggler performs one feat quickly and hurries on to another; he does not devote weeks after weeks to the same thing over and over, deliberately, in full view of hundreds who sit beside or confronting him in broad daylight, not to enjoy but to detect his trick. A deceiver naturally avoids conversation on the subject of his knavery, but these ladies converse freely and fully with regard to the origin of these " rappings " in their dwellings years ago, the various sensations they caused, the neighbourhood excitement created, the progress of the developments—what they have seen, heard and experienced from first to last. If all were false, they could not fail to have involved themselves ere this in a labyrinth of blasting contradictions, as each separately gives accounts of the most astonishing developments at this or that time. Persons foolish enough so to commit themselves without reserve or caution could not have deferred a thorough self-exposure for a single week.

Of course, a variety of opinions of so strange a matter would naturally be formed by the various persons who have visited them, and we presume that those who have merely run into their room for an hour or so, and listened, among a huddle of strangers, to a medley of questions—not all admitting of very profitable answers—put to certain invisible intelligences, and answered by " rappings," or singular noises on the floor, table, etc., as the alphabet was called over, or otherwise, would naturally go away, perhaps puzzled, probably disgusted, rarely convinced. It is hardly possible that a matter, ostensibly so grave, could be presented under circumstances less favourable to conviction. But of those who have enjoyed proper opportunities for a full investigation, we believe that fully three-fourths are convinced, as we are, that these singular sounds and seeming manifestations are not produced

by Mrs. Fox and her daughters, nor by any human being connected with them.

How they *are* caused, and whence they proceed, are questions which open a much wider field of inquiry, with whose way-marks we do not profess to be familiar. He must be well acquainted with the arcana of the universe, who shall presume dogmatically to decide that these manifestations are natural or supernatural. The ladies say that they are informed that this is but the beginning of a new era, or economy, in which spirits clothed in the flesh are to be more closely and palpably connected with those who have put on immortality; that the manifestations have already appeared in many other families and are destined to be diffused and rendered clearer, until all who will may communicate freely with their friends who have "shuffled off this mortal coil." Of all this we know nothing, and shall guess nothing.

But if we were simply to print (which we shall not) the questions we asked and answers we received, during a two-hours' uninterrupted conference with the "rappers," we should at once be accused of having done so expressly to sustain the theory which regards these manifestations as the utterances of departed spirits.

H. G.

II

Note on Chapter VI

Pen-picture of Lake Harris by Laurence Oliphant

There was a remarkable alternation of vivacity and deliberation about the movements of Mr. Masollam. His voice seemed pitched in two different keys, the effect of which was, when he changed them, to make one seem a distant echo of the other—a species of ventriloquistic phenomenon which was calculated to impart a sudden and not altogether pleasant shock to the nerves of the listeners. When he talked with what I may term his "near" voice, he was generally rapid and vivacious; when he exchanged it for his "far off" one, he was solemn and impressive. His hair, which had once been raven black, was now streaked with grey, but it was still thick and fell in a massive wave over his ears, and nearly to his shoulders, giving him something of a leonine aspect. His brow was overhanging and bushy, and his eyes were like revolving lights in two dark caverns, so fitfully did they seem to emit flashes and then lose all expression. Like his voice, they too had a near and a far-off expression, which could be adjusted to the required focus like a telescope, growing smaller and smaller as though in an effort to project the sight beyond the limits of natural vision. At such times they would be so entirely devoid of all appreciation of outward objects as to produce almost the impression of blindness, when suddenly the focus would change, the pupils expand, and rays flash from them like lightning from a thundercloud, giving an unexpected and extraordinary brilliancy to a face which seemed promptly to respond to the summons. The general cast of countenance, the upper part of which, were it not for the depth of the eye-sockets, would have been strikingly handsome, was decidedly Semitic; and in repose the general effect was almost statuesque in its calm fixedness. The mouth was partially concealed by a heavy moustache and long iron-grey beard; but the transition from repose to animation revealed an extraordinary flexibility in those muscles which had a moment before appeared so rigid, and the whole character of the countenance was altered as suddenly as the expression of the eye. It would perhaps be prying too much into the secrets of Nature, or, at all events, into the secrets of Mr. Masollam's nature, to inquire whether this lightening and darkening of the countenance was voluntary or not. In a lesser degree it is a common phenomenon with

us all: the effect of one class of emotions is, vulgarly speaking, to make a man look black, and of another to make him look bright. The peculiarity of Mr. Masollam was that he could look so much blacker and brighter than most people, and made the change of expression with such extraordinary rapidity and intensity that it seemed a sort of facial legerdemain, and suggested the suspicion that it might be an acquired faculty. There was, moreover, another change which he apparently had the power of working on his countenance, which affects other people involuntarily, and which generally, especially in the case of the fair sex, does so very much against their will. . . . Mr. Masollam had the faculty of looking very much older one hour than he did the next. There were moments when a careful study of his wrinkles and of his dull, faded-looking eyes would lead you to put him down at eighty if he was a day; and there were others when his flashing glance, expanding nostril, broad, smooth brow and mobile mouth would make a rejuvenating combination that would for a moment convince you that you had been at least five-and-twenty years out in your first estimate. . . . These rapid contrasts were calculated to arrest the attention of the most casual observer, and to produce a sensation which was not altogether pleasant when first one made his acquaintance. It was not exactly mistrust—for both manners were perfectly frank and natural—so much as perplexity. He seemed to be two opposite characters rolled into one, and to be presenting undesigningly a curious moral and physiological problem for solution, which had a disagreeable sort of attractiveness about it, for you almost immediately felt it to be insoluble, and yet it would not let you rest. He might be the best or the worst of men."

III

Notes to Chapter VII

Additional Testimony of Professor and Mrs. De Morgan

Professor De Morgan says :

I gave an account of all this to a friend who was then alive, a man of *ologies* and *ometers* both, who was not at all disposed to think it anything but a clever imposture. "But," said he, "what you tell me is very singular: I shall go myself to Mrs. Hayden ; I shall go alone and not give my name. I don't think I shall hear anything from anybody, but if I do I shall find out the trick. Depend upon it, I shall find it out." He went accordingly, and came to me to report progress. He told me that he had gone a step beyond me, for he had insisted on taking his alphabet behind a large folding screen and asking his questions by the alphabet and a pencil, as well as receiving the answers. No persons except himself and Mrs. Hayden were in the room. The "spirit" who came to him was one whose unfortunate death was fully detailed in the usual way. My friend told me that he was "awestruck," and had nearly forgotten all his precautions.

The things which I have narrated were the beginning of a long series of experiences, many as remarkable as what I have given ; many of a minor character, separately worth little, but jointly of weight when considered in connexion with the more decisive proofs of reality. Many of a confirmatory tendency as mere facts, but of a character not sustentive of the gravity and dignity of the spiritual world. The celebrated apparition of Giles Scroggins is a serious personage compared to some which have fallen in my way, and a logical one, too. If these things be spirits, they show that pretenders, coxcombs and liars are to be found on the other side of the grave as well as on this ; and what for no ? as Meg Dods said.

The whole question may receive such persevering attention as shall worm out the real truth ; or it may die away, obtaining only casual notice, until a new outburst of phenomena recalls its history of this day. But this subsidence does not seem to begin. It is now twelve or thirteen years since the matter began to be everywhere talked about, during which time there have been many announcements of the total extinction of the "spirit-mania." But in several

cases, as in Tom Moore's fable, the extinguishers have caught fire. Were it the absurdity it is often said to be, it would do much good by calling attention to the "manifestations" of another absurdity, the philosophy of possibilities and impossibilities, the philosophy of the *fourth court*. Extremes meet, but the "meeting" is often for the purpose of mutual exposure, like that of silly gentlemen in the day of pop-and-paragraph duels. This on the supposition that Spiritualism is all either imposture or delusion; it cannot be more certainly one or the other than is the philosophy opposed to it. I have no acquaintance either with P or Q. But I feel sure that the decided conviction of all who can see both sides of the shield must be, that it is more likely that P has seen a ghost than that Q *knows* he *cannot* have seen one. I know that Q *says* he knows it.

In this connexion the following from the *Publishers' Circular* on the appearance of Mrs. De Morgan's book shows a contemporary estimate of Professor De Morgan's critical faculty:

Mere *littérateurs* and writers of fiction may be pardoned for a little tendency to the visionary and unreal, but the fact that the well-known author of the standard works on Formal Logic, the Differential Calculus, and the Theory of Probabilities, should figure with his lady in the characters of believers in spirit-rapping and table-turning, will probably take most people by surprise. There is perhaps no contributor to our reviews who is more at home in demolishing a fallacy, or in good-humouredly disposing of an ignorant pretender in science than Mr. De Morgan. His clear, logical, witty and whimsical style is readily traced by literary readers in many a striking article in our critical journals. He is probably the last man whom the sceptical in such mysteries would expect to find on the side of Mr. Home and Mrs. Newton Crosland. Yet we must record the fact that Mr. De Morgan declares himself "perfectly convinced that he has both seen and heard, in a manner which should make unbelief impossible, things *called* spiritual which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake."

Let us add to the foregoing Mrs. De Morgan's testimony:

It is now ten years since I began attentively to observe the phenomena of "Spiritualism." My first experience occurred in the presence of Mrs. Hayden from New York. I never heard a word which could shake my strong conviction of Mrs. Hayden's honesty; indeed, the result of our first interview, when my name was *quite unknown*

to her, was sufficient to prove that I was not on that occasion the victim of her imposture, or my own credulity.

After describing the visit to Mrs. Hayden, to whom none of the names of those present was mentioned, she says :

We sat for at least a quarter of an hour and were beginning to apprehend a failure, when a very small throbbing or patting sound was heard, apparently in the centre of the table. Great was our pleasure when Mrs. Hayden, who had before seemed rather anxious, said, "They are coming." *Who were coming?* Neither she nor we could tell. As the sounds gathered strength, which they seemed to do with our necessary conviction of their *genuineness*, whatever might be their origin, Mrs. Hayden said, "*There is a spirit who wishes to speak with someone here, but as I do not know the names of the gentlemen and ladies, I must point to each in turn, and, when I come to the right one, beg that the spirit will rap.*" This was agreed to by our invisible companion, who rapped in assent. Mrs. Hayden then pointed to each of the party in turn. To my surprise, and even annoyance (for I did not wish this, and many of my friends *did*), no sounds were heard until she indicated myself, the last in the circle. I was seated at her right hand; she had gone round from the left. I was then directed to point to the letters of a large type alphabet, and I may add that, having no wish to obtain the name of any dear friend or relation, I certainly did not rest, as it has been surmised is often done, on any letter. However, to my astonishment, the not common name of a dear relation who had left this world seventeen years before, and whose surname was that of my father's, not my husband's, family was spelt. Then this sentence, "*I am happy, and with F. and G.*" (names at length). I then received a promise of future communication with all three spirits; the two last had left the world twenty and twelve years before. Other persons present then received communications by rapping; of these some were as singularly truthful and satisfactory as that to myself, while others were false and even mischievous.

Mrs. De Morgan observes that after the séances with Mrs. Hayden she and her friends experimented in private, "and it was found that a number of persons, both in and out of my own family, possessed the faculty of mediumship in a greater or less degree."

IV

Note to Chapter X

Were the Davenports Jugglers or Spiritualists?

As Mr. Houdini has seemed to question whether the Davenports themselves ever asserted that they were Spiritualists, it may clear the matter up finally to quote the following from a letter written by them in 1868 to the *Banner of Light*, the leading Spiritualist journal in the United States. Dealing with the report that they were not Spiritualists, they wrote :

It is singular that any individual, sceptic or Spiritualist, could believe such statements after fourteen years of the most bitter persecution and violent opposition, culminating in the riots of Liverpool, Huddersfield, and Leeds, where our lives were placed in imminent peril by the fury of brutal mobs, our property destroyed, and where we suffered a loss of seventy-five thousand dollars, and all because *we would not renounce Spiritualism*, and declare ourselves jugglers, when threatened by the mob, and urged to do so. In conclusion, we have only to say that we denounce all such statements as base falsehoods.

V

Note to Chapter XVI

The Mediumship of the Rev. W. Stainton Moses

Describing an experience of levitation, Stainton Moses writes :

As I was seated in the corner of the inner room my chair was drawn back into the corner and then raised off the floor about a foot, as I judged, and then allowed to drop to the floor whilst I was carried up in the corner. I described my apparent movement to Dr. and Mrs S., and took from my pocket a lead pencil with which, when I became stationary, I made a mark on the wall opposite to my chest. This mark is as near as may be six feet from the floor. I do not think my posture was changed, and I was lowered very gently until I found myself in my chair again. My sensation was that of being lighter than the air. No pressure on any part of the body; no unconsciousness or entrancement. From the position of the mark on the wall it is clear that my head must have been close to the ceiling. My voice, Dr. S. told me afterwards, sounded oddly away up in the corner, as if my head were turned from the table, as it was according to my observation and the mark I made. The ascent, of which I was perfectly conscious, was very gradual and steady, not unlike that of being in a lift, but without any perceptible sensation of motion other than that of feeling lighter than the atmosphere. My position, as I have said, was unchanged. I was simply levitated and lowered to my old place.

Of the passage of matter through matter we have this instance related :

On August 28 (1872) seven objects from different rooms were brought into the séance-room; on the 30th, four, and amongst them a little bell from the adjoining dining-room. We always left gas brightly burning in that room and in the hall outside, so that if the doors were opened even for a moment a blaze of light would have been let into the dark room in which we sat. As this never happened, we have full assurance from what Dr. Carpenter considers the best authority, Common Sense, that the doors remained closed. In the dining-room there was a little bell. We heard it commence to ring, and could trace it by its sound as it approached the door which separated us from it. What was our astonishment when we found that

in spite of the closed door the sound drew nearer to us! It was evidently within the room in which we sat, for the bell was carried round the room, ringing loudly the whole time. After completing the circuit of the room, it was brought down, passed under the table, coming up close to my elbow. It rang under my very nose, and went round about my head, then passed round the circle, ringing close to the faces of all. It was finally placed upon the table. I do not wish to theorize, but this seems to me to dispose of arguments which would put forward the theory of our being psychologized, or of the object coming down the chimney, as an explanation of this difficult subject.

Dr. Speer thus describes the appearance of a spirit light and a materialized hand on August 10, 1873:

A large globe of light rose from the side of the table opposite to me, and sailed up to the level of our faces, and then vanished. It was followed by several more, all of which rose up from the side opposite to me, and sometimes to the right and sometimes to the left of the medium. At request the next light was placed slowly in the centre of the table. It was apparently as large as a shaddock, and was surrounded with drapery. At this time the medium was entranced, and the controlling spirit informed me that he would endeavour to place the light in the medium's hand. Failing in this, he said he would knock on the table in front of me. Almost immediately a light came and stood on the table close to me. "You see; now listen—I will knock." Very slowly the light rose up and struck three distinct blows on the table. "Now I will show you my hand." A large, very bright light then came up, and inside of it appeared the materialized hand of the spirit. He moved the fingers about close to my face. The appearance was as distinct as can be conceived.

An example of strong physical force is thus recorded by Stainton Moses:

We had ventured on one occasion, contrary to direction, to add to our circle a strange member. Some trivial phenomena occurred, but the usual controlling spirit did not appear. When next we sat, he came, and probably none of us will easily forget the sledge-hammer blows with which he smote the table. The noise was distinctly audible in the room below and gave one the idea that the table would be broken to pieces. In vain we withdrew from the table, hoping to diminish the power. The heavy blows increased in intensity, and the whole room shook with their force. The direst penalties were threatened if we again interfered with the development by bringing in new sitters. We have not ventured to do so again; and I do not think we shall easily be persuaded to risk another similar objurgation.

VI

Notes to Chapter XXV

Mr. Wales's Automatic Writing

Mr. Wales writes to the author :

I cannot think there was anything in my antecedent reading to account for this coincidence. I had certainly read nothing you had published on the subject, I had purposely avoided "Raymond" and books like it, in order not to vitiate my own results, and the "Proceedings" of the S.P.R. which I had read at that time, do not touch, as you know, upon after-death conditions. At any rate I obtained, at various times, statements (as my contemporary notes show) to the effect that, in this persisting state of existence, they have bodies which, though imperceptible by our senses, are as solid to them as ours to us, that these bodies are based on the general characteristics of our present bodies but beautified ; that they have no age, no pain, no rich and poor ; that they wear clothes and take nourishment ; that they do not sleep (though they spoke of passing occasionally into a semi-conscious state which they called "lying asleep"—a condition, it just occurs to me, which seems to correspond roughly with the "hypnoidal" state) ; that, after a period which is usually shorter than the average lifetime here, they pass to some further state of existence ; that people of similar thoughts, tastes, and feelings gravitate together; that married couples do not necessarily reunite, but that the love of man and woman continues and is freed of elements which with us often militate against its perfect realization ; that immediately after death people pass into a semi-conscious rest-state lasting various periods, that they are unable to experience bodily pain, but are susceptible at times to some mental anxiety ; that a painful death is "absolutely unknown," that religious beliefs make no difference whatever in the after-state, and that their life altogether is intensely happy, and no one having ever realized it could wish to return here. I got no reference to "work" by that word, but much to the various interests that were said to occupy them. That is probably only another way of saying the same thing. "Work" with us has come usually to mean "work to live," and that, I was emphatically informed, was not the case with them—that all the requirements of life were somehow mysteriously "provided." Neither did I get any

reference to a definite "temporary penal state," but I gathered that people begin there at the point of intellectual and moral development where they leave off here; and since their state of happiness was based mainly upon sympathy, those who came over in a low moral condition failed at first for various lengths of time to have the capacity to appreciate and enjoy it.

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